

소만..
잡고
잡을텐
데?!

류호성 자음
유나물 일러스트





"AS A WIFE, I CAN'T JUST TURN A BLIND EYE TO
MY HUSBAND BEING BULLIED!"

"THAT'S RIGHT! YOU SHOULDN'T BULLY MY DAD!"
"—LIKE I SAID! ISN'T IT BECAUSE OF THE TWO OF YOU
THAT THE SITUATION BECAME LIKE THIS?!"

Celebratorily, it seems that I have become a dad.
Even though we only slept while holding hands!

Pleasant Family Outing!

(+2 unwelcomed guests)



Shin Nanda

Ha Nabom



Jin Jaro

Ja Saeyeon

Jin Jaim

"BUT MY CHEST HAS BEEN FEELING HEAVY LATELY AS WELL.....
EVEN MY BRASSIERE FEELS A BIT TIGHTER.....
DO YOU THINK I'VE GAINED WEIGHT? HM?"
"IF YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT YOUR WEIGHT, THEN EAT SOME VEGETABLES
AND NOT JUST MEAT."
".....IS DAD ACTUALLY A EUNUCH?"



The family's warm and comfortable moment.....?

노만,
노잡고
자을텐
데?!
데?!



류호성 자음
유나물 일러스트

NOVEL
N
ENGINE



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Credits

We Should Have Slept While Only Holding Hands, And Yet?! (손만 잡고 잤을 텐데?!) - Volume 01 by Ryu Hosung (류호성).

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This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

Preface

For starters, volume 1 of this series is often referred to as a ‘landmine’ within the Korean reading community. “Good illustrations, bad story”. This was the first impression most people had when they read volume 1. I will also fully admit that during specific parts of this volume, the MC gets rather dislikeable, like, a lot.

However, there’s a single reason why I was able to get through this volume. The fact that this is a completed series with 7 volumes. In the back of my head, I was aware that volume 1 was going to have the MC at his worst state, so I read while looking forward to seeing the MC’s growth and development. During a rather tense part of this volume when the MC was coming to terms with his past, I will admit that I teared up slightly due to how it was relatable to me in a certain way. When I started to read volume 2, it was a pleasant surprise to see that it wasn’t just the MC who was growing.

I read through a couple of the no-spoiler reviews for this entire series and every single review I found was rather positive. The consensus seems to be that volume 3 is when the series starts to get really enjoyable. You can even see the author getting better at writing.

In conclusion, while you guys are reading through this volume, I recommend that you hold back your rash opinions for now. The beginning is going to be rough, but the payoff will, according to the reviews, be great.

I hope you enjoy the story of this strange family.

Shalvation

O. Appearance

On **that day**, I decided.

That I wouldn't be deceived by that sort of lie for the second time.

That I wouldn't become like those untaught masses who are fooled by the idea of an appealing relationship.

Therefore, I don't need something like a family.

I had made that decision.

.....I had made that resolve, but.

"W-Wait. This is all a misunderstanding. I-I'll explain it in a way that even you uneducated masses can understand, so......"

Just how did I end up like this?

I have to be calm. Nothing will get solved if I were to panic. There's that one saying, isn't there? Even if you're thrown into a tiger's den, you'll survive as long as you keep your head on straight.

"Are you fine with those last words?"

"It's all right. There's no problem."

.....Stay calm, my ass. Do you think it's possible to stay calm in this situation?

It's Monday morning and I'm already in a situation where my entire life can be sent flying at a moment's notice.

It was morning assembly right now, the time of day where students were still arriving at school. Although morning assembly has always been a time where the class was noisy, the atmosphere today was

more terrifying than it was uproarious.

The enraged, ignorant mob was narrowing their encirclement around me who was currently trapped in a corner. In their hands, they held all sorts of lethal weapons. Things like desks and chairs were charming. Mechanical pencils, compasses, and box cutters were so straightforward that they were horrendous. The guy holding super glue and scissors made a cold sweat run down the back of my neck.

There should still be some awkwardness left in the class since it hasn't even been a week since the new semester had started, but it seems they had all become one with their hostility towards me. WE ARE THE WORLD.

“Everyone! You shouldn't bully Jjaro!”

The instant Saeyeon shouted that out, the encirclement that was closing in on me stopped altogether as if it were a lie.

While narrowing her large eyes, Saeyeon promptly squeezed herself between me and our classmates.

“Behaving scarily and terrifying someone isn't a good thing to do! Bad!”

“Saeyeon……!”

That's right. Just as I expected, you're the only one who I can trust to be on my side. But you should say my name properly. How long do you intend to call me Jjaro?

While slightly raising the ends of her eyebrows, Saeyeon faced everyone and confidently made a declaration.

“As a **wife**, I can't just turn a blind eye to my **husband** being bullied!”

“That's right! You shouldn't bully my **dad**!”

“Like I said, isn’t it because of the two of you that the situation became like this?!”

.....Like hell she’s on my side. She’s an enemy who’s also trying to get me killed.

The little girl who was holding Saeyeon’s hand.

Large pupils, alluring cheeks that looked as if they’d be good to pull, and soft lips. Rather than appearing like a charming woman, she had a young face that made her appearance closer to being a charming girl, no, a charming child. Her tied up apple hairstyle was cute.

She was probably an elementary schooler at the very most. Even her height and form were on the level of a developing country that was still in desperate need of growth.

“.....”

Because of this kid’s appearance, the eyes of our classmates went back and forth between me, Saeyeon, and the kid.

That’s right. I know what you guys are thinking.

Although her pupils resembled Saeyeon’s own eyes, her eyebrows were like mine. Her slightly sharper jawline was similar to my own jaw as well. Similar. She looked like us.

However, no matter how much this kid resembled Saeyeon and me, no matter how much she looked as if she were a 50/50 fusion of Saeyeon and me, no matter how much it seemed as if this child would come out if Saeyeon and I really made a child, “S-She’s not my daughter!”

After my exclamation, I could hear the kid’s response.

“.....hk.”

No, this isn’t a response, is it?

“Hk, huu, uuu…….”

While her large eyes were filled to the brim with tears, it was like she was trying to forcefully prevent herself from crying out loud. Uh, wait, doesn't this make it seem as if…….

“How could you be so mean, Jjaro! You meanie!”

“I'm the bad guy?!”

Ah, I said that out loud. Hasn't it been a really long time since I received this sort of gaze from Saeyeon? No matter how you look at her, she was clearly upset.

“How can you say something like that to a child? And to your own daughter at that!”

“No, Saeyeon, that's what I'm trying to say, she's not…….”

“Don't cry Jaim. There, there. It's okay. Mommy will scold your mean dad. Bad!”

“O-ow?!”

This girl, she actually hit me!

Saeyeon was stroking the kid's hair and speaking to her in a warm voice while not even paying the slightest amount of attention towards my boiling anger.

“Mom! Dad, dad said to me that…….”

“Yes, yes. Mommy is here. Don't cry.”

The kid rubbed her face against Saeyeon as she held the girl in her embrace. Additionally, Saeyeon had a mother-like, attentive expression on her face as she stroked the kid's hair. From a third-party's perspective, it might appear like there's a nice and warm mood wrapped around them.

“As I thought, it was like that.”

“Even after doing something like that, to make excuses when there’s distinctive proof like this right in front of us.”

……Like I said, from a third-party’s perspective, these two.

Along with some rumbling, the encirclement of classmates closed in on me slowly as they also continued to glare at me with eyes that looked as if they were a bunch of hawks hunting down their prey. This is terrifying. I might actually piss myself.

But I really don’t want to become a dad nor do I want to be torn apart by an angered mob and have my corpse carried down the street.

If that’s the case, then.

“Ja Saeyeon. Nothing happened yesterday, right? There wasn’t anything, right? Tell them there wasn’t! Say it! Tell them right this instant!”

I have to calmly, persuade Saeyeon here.

Moreover, persuasion means to make the opposition say the words which you want them to say.

Let’s persuade her while pulling on her cheeks. Saeyeon must have been in pain since she was closing her eyes tightly and struggling to open her mouth.

“Ububububu! Y-Yeah, nyahin hahhened yesherday…….”

“All right! Nothing happened, yeah? Right?”

Okay. Good girl. There must have been some lingering pain left in her cheeks since Saeyeon was rubbing them with teary eyes, but she still nodded.

“See? Nothing happened yesterday. We merely——.”

“.....Slept together.”

“———For you to backstab me like this?!”

And in this situation where my life was on the line!

“But......”

Saeyeon averted her gaze slightly and, while covering her cheeks which were red because she was either embarrassed or because I had pulled on them earlier, she spoke in a soft voice.

“But still, what you said to me yesterday and the fact that Jaim was born like this, I’m happy......”

“I told you, stop making the misunderstanding bigger! What did I even say?!”

Although Saeyeon pouted and looked at me angrily in response to my reaction, she grinned.

“Yesterday, Jjaro was the one who first suggested that we should sleep together, remember?”

“No, well, that was because......”

The cold winter has passed and even the forsythias are beginning to bloom thanks to the warm sunlight, and thus, the world welcomes a new beginning.

“That’s how we were able to have a child like this!”

This period of time where everything starts anew,

“———This little girl’s name is Jin Jaim! She’s Jjaro and my daughter!”

Celebratorily, it seems that I have become a dad.

Even though we only slept while holding hands.

1. Observation

It's not me.

If someone were to ask what wasn't me, then it just wasn't.

I have to be calm. Nothing will get solved if I were to panic.

No matter how much something seems and appears both difficult and like an unsolvable problem, as long as you put some time into it and follow procedures, you're destined to find the answer in the end. Everything in the world has a single answer after all.

Let's organize the situation in order.

People say that you should recall who you are first when trying to confirm the contents of your memory. Name, Jin Jaro. A genius scientist of this age who's in his second year of high school and also possesses a name that's, whether it was done maliciously or as a joke, filled to the brim with a definition that means to live truthfully at all times. Okay, there's no problem up to here.

The thing I had to confirm next was whether I could perceive the situation that was happening before me.

The person directly in front of me was Ja Saeyeon.

My childhood friend who lived next door to me since pre-school.

Large, sparkling eyes. Soft cheeks that were perfect to pull. Her smooth lips drew a delicate curve and her long, straight hair, which had a hairpin in it, waved around.

A charming girl with a cute, child-like appearance that made her look more like a 'beautiful girl' than a 'beautiful woman'.

However, her figure didn't fit that face of hers.

Arms and legs that were long and smooth. Breasts that weren't too big or too small but a size that made one think that this was the perfect volume to be considered beautiful. That model-like body was enough to make something like a normal school uniform shine as if it were something that was on the cover of a fashion magazine.

Childhood friend, that was the very symbol of romanticism.

You're able to witness your childhood friend in all sorts of appearances since a very young age, and among the times you played house, there was probably an event where you both promised to marry one another. As you grow up, you continue to stick together, and when a sudden thought like 'Was this girl always this pretty?' pops up in your head, everything would proceed at a lightning fast pace since, of course, your childhood friend would have already fallen for you at that point. In the scene where you're both confirming each other's feelings, effects like having the splendid glow of the setting sun in the background are like one of the various services from a Chinese restaurant like when they give out free fried dumplings.

However, this sort of romance is called romance because it's difficult to see in reality.

For starters, the chance of having a childhood friend is already astronomical. Even if luck is on your side and you have something similar to a childhood friend, you'll only get along during pre-school and elementary school. Once you go through puberty and enter middle school, you'll become negligent. Their existence would simply turn into someone who lives next door around the time you're in high school. University? Who are you again?

Nevertheless, my relationship with Saeyeon wasn't like that.

Quite the ideal childhood friend in terms of romanticizing. In other words, things like going to wake them up in the morning, wearing an apron and making them food, showing them your homework, and occasionally sleeping together. We had that kind of relationship.

It was just that sort of relationship, but.

“.....Ehehe.”

Just, why exactly?

“Dad, hug me!”

“Hiiiiiiiik!”

Once I quickly avoided the kid, who was running at me with her arms spread open and smiling brightly, there was a ‘bang!’ and the kid collided against the wall.

“Uuu..... Dad, why did you dodge.....?”

The kid looked up at me with teary eyes while sitting on the floor and rubbing her red nose.

“I’m not your dad! I’m not!”

I shouted at the kid and quickly created a bigger gap between us.

I see. So that’s how it is. I understand now.

I turned my head and yelled while facing those despicable untaught masses.

“This must be your plot to slander me, right?! Regardless, I won’t be taken down by something like this! If you thought that you could obstruct this great me with this sort of scandal, then you’ve made a grave mistake, you untaught masses!”

“......”

“Don’t look at me with eyes that look like a hen that’s staring at scrambled eggs!”

My composure almost faltered for a moment, you know!

Several of the kids who were standing at the front of the encirclement shook their heads in reaction to my shout and spoke

considerately while looking at me with pitying eyes.

“Jaro……. We won’t say anything bad, so obediently admit your crime.”

“Yeah. If you let everything out, then you’ll definitely feel lighter.”

“Surely you don’t think we’d do something to our fellow classmate, right?”

“……You know you aren’t persuasive when you’re saying that while licking the blade of your box cutter, right? Rather than that, that’s seriously terrifying so stop it. You’ll hurt yourself, you know? Tetanus is scary, you know?”

Why are you licking that in the first place? Is it tasty?

“Stop it, everyone. Jjaro is feeling embarrassed because you guys keep doing that.”

“Like hell I’m embarrassed! This is all your fault!”

I glared at Saeyeon, who was furtively trying to ride along the atmosphere, and shouted.

“In the first place, how is that girl, my daughter? Tell them the truth!”

“But it’s the truth, isn’t it?”

As if she didn’t understand what I was trying to say, Saeyeon spoke while tilting her head.

“Babies are made if you sleep together while holding hands, right?”

…….

…….

“……What?”

Sorry. It took me a moment since my thoughts ran away from home for a second so I had to bring them back. Right, it's Saeyeon. It's Saeyeon.

Saeyeon is, um, how should I say it.

That's right. She has flowers in her head.

.....No, this might cause a bit of a misunderstanding. She does have a flower hairpin attached to her hair.

Should I say that her head is like a flowerbed with a fairy playing around in it? Or should I say that she's still like an elementary schooler? Her body was the only thing to grow up, it was like dealing with a kid who had yet to go through puberty.

More than anything else, she was a girl who said those sorts of things wholeheartedly.

That's why, take a deep breath. Getting worked up isn't good. Relax, relax.

Inhale deeply, exhale deeply. Inhale deeply once more and,

"How can you believe in something like that when you're already in high school?!"

I shouted as loud as I could.

"Jjaro you said it yourself, didn't you? That babies are made if you sleep while holding hands."

"You shouldn't still believe in something that I said back in pre-school! Fine, I'll re-educate you! Babies, you see, when a male's phallus goes inside a female's genital and ejaculates, the sperm fertilizes the ovum and....."

"....."

"Ow! Ow! All I did was tell her the truth, didn't I?!"

I was hit enthusiastically. The person who threw the dictionary, I'll get you back later, I've memorized your face. All right. I'll explain it again, but in a way that even these uneducated masses can understand as well.

"Y-Yeah! Babies can only be made between two adults!"

"But I'm also an adult, you know?"

"Hah. How are you an adult?"

"I'm properly struck with magic every month and....."

"....."

"Ow! Hey! Why do I have to get hit for this as well?!"

The people who threw those desks, I'll get you back later, I'm memorizing your faces..... there were too many of you so I probably can't remember you all, but just you wait.

"Back in middle school, when I woke up and saw blood, mom told me that I was an adult now, mon. On that day, when I told Jjaro the news on our way to school, Jjaro even laughed and congratulated me....."

"....."

"Oow! Ouch! Don't wrap me up in a sheet and hit me!"

Was it wrong of me to congratulate Saeyeon for becoming an adult? I even properly bought her a rose!

Even after seeing me get beat up, Saeyeon spoke while giggling.

"Right? I'm an adult, right? I was even able to have a child like this!"

Theory – One becomes pregnant after the sperm fertilizes the ovum and nidates.

Experience – We held hands and slept and a child was born.

Conclusion – Therefore, according to my experience, you become pregnant if you sleep while holding hands.

“.....”

I see. She’s our daughter that was born after Saeyeon and I slept while holding hands.

I see. It was like that. Saeyeon was an adult.

“.....There’s no way that’s the case!”

Yeah! Don’t panic! Don’t be caught in something like cognitive dissonance!

Saeyeon tilted her head once and giggled.

“We’re adults, and since we love each other, if we sleep while holding hands.....”

“What do you mean love?! That’s just my **job**! It’s a business relationship! You even said okay to that as well!”

“Really, Jjaro. Even if you make up excuses like that, I already know all of Jjaro’s feelings.”

“Like hell you do!”

“Eei, really. Jjaro likes me as well, right? Right?”

Saeyeon smiled brightly, making it seem like she understood everything.

“Isn’t that why Jjaro suggested we should sleep while holding hands?”

“Nooooooooooooooooooooo!”

“I’m happy that I was able to become a real adult last night ♡”

“I said that you’re wrong! Listen to me! That isn’t the case!”

“Since our first child came out as a girl, it’d be good if our second child came out as a boy who resembles Jjaro.”

“Hello? Are you listening to me?”

“Let’s work hard together so we can live in a 2-floor house with a garden!”

“Aaah! This is driving me crazy!”

How am I supposed to explain this? The moment I pulled at my hair and shouted that out, I felt something pull on my sleeve so I turned my head.

“M-Mom, Dad, you two are fighting, aren’t you……?”

The instant that voice was heard, everyone’s gazes were gathered to one spot.

At some point, the kid, who had an anxious expression on her face since earlier, had approached me and was tugging on my sleeve while her large eyes were filled to the brim with tears.

“Mom, Dad, you two are fighting, aren’t you……? You are, aren’t you?”

“Like I said, kid. We’re not your mom and dad, and we aren’t fighti…….”

“Fighting isn’t okay! Mom and Dad, you can’t fight!”

She must have not been able to hear my words as the kid shook her head and shouted in a voice that was loud enough for everyone to hear.

“You can’t fight! Instead of fighting, quickly **unite! Unite!**”

“What dead man’s unite is that supposed to be?!”

“Dad, you’re the one who told me that reconciling after a fight is called uniting, you know?”

“I never said that before! I’ve never said that in my life!”

“But, I came here so Mom and Dad could unite…….”

“There’s no way that would happen! Go ask your parents to do that!”

“That’s why I’m asking you, Dad.”

“I told you I’m not your dad! You should listen to what people say as well!”

“…….”

“You guys as well, didn’t I tell you to stop looking at me like that?!”

That gaze which reminded me of a hen that was staring at some scrambled eggs, it’s incredibly discomforting, you know?

One of the members of the untaught mob, who was standing at the front, placed his hand against his forehead as if my words were hurting his head and fumbled with his words as he asked me a question.

“Eh, in any case, Jaro……. Did you really, sleep, while only holding hands?”

“I’ve said that several times already! Have you forgotten Korean as well now?”

In response to my words,

My classmates all sighed at the same time as if they were of one mind.

“Why are you guys sighing?!”

What about my current situation do I deserve to receive this sort of treatment?

It appeared as if everyone had received even more of a headache because of my exclamation since they all either covered their faces or placed their hands against their foreheads before letting out another sigh and mumbling among one another.

“I thought that Jaro had finally given up on being a human…….”

“There’s a limit to shotgun marriages. Isn’t this too much?”

What are these bastards saying?

“Yeah. How could you make a child first without even uniting?”

“Don’t you feel sorry for Saeyeon?”

“How many things did you guys leave behind when you came out of your mothers’ wombs? Do you want me to give you some A/S?”

Just what are these uneducated people thinking?

Similarly, Saeyeon was tilting her head as though she had no idea what was going on. Our classmates patted that Saeyeon’s shoulder and nodded like they understood everything now.

“Saeyeon, do your best. We’re on your side after all.

“Yeah. One day, Jaro will notice your feelings as well.”

“Still, if Jaro was able to suggest that you should sleep together, then doesn’t that mean you’ve progressed?!”

“……I see you untaught masses are ignoring me as if it were obvious.”

However, Saeyeon laughed and shook her head towards the

encouragement our classmates were giving her.

“Mm, it’s fine. I’m already overjoyed since my dream has been fulfilled now!”

“.....Wait. Stop right there.”

Saeyeon was making an expression that made it seem as if she were the happiest girl in the world.

“Yup! Jjaro’s wife! Now we’ll live happily as the three of us! Starting from today, we’re a family after all!”

Saeyeon smiled while her eyes sparkled, displaying her sincere happiness.

Beside her, the kid was looking at Saeyeon with a moved gaze.

In ones and twos, our classmates started to clap in a way that made it feel as if we were in a wedding hall.

.....Yeah, it was like that.

Saeyeon was the star of our class.

A cute face and a nice body. A girl whose smile was never lost from her face. Her grades were, well, obviously terrible.

In any case, with her unsullied innocence, she was a girl who boldly wrote ‘I want to marry Jjaro and become his wife’ on her future career survey sheet.

It was a clear fact that I knew, my classmates knew, the entire school body knew, and also the teachers knew.

Guys who liked her as the opposite sex all went away and the girls, who were cautious because they thought Saeyeon was just be pretending to be cute, were able to relax after it became certain who Saeyeon belonged to.

At this point, it wasn't just one or two people who had come up to me and told me to 'make Saeyeon happy'.

Our classmates were probably applauding her selflessly since that very girl's dream was finally fulfilled.

"J-Jeez! It's embarrassing if you keep doing that..... Isn't that right, Jjaro?"

Although Saeyeon's cheeks became red due to the applause from our classmates, the smile on her face wasn't showing any signs of disappearing anytime soon.

And as the other target of the applause, I.....

"I beg of you, so please go away. I'll give you as much money as you want."

I bowed deeply towards the kid.

"....."

"Ow! Oow! You're stepping on me? Are you stepping on me, Saeyeon?!"

Saeyeon, who was firmly stepping on the top of my head which I had lowered, narrowed her round and adorable eyes, making it apparent that she was really upset before speaking.

"Jjaro, if you keep talking like that, then I'm going to break up with you! No matter how embarrassed you are, how could you say something like that to your daughter?! I'm disappointed!"

Then, as if Saeyeon's words were a signal of some sort, our classmates took out their lethal weapons all at once.

"....."

According to rumors, among foreign traditional cultures, there's a tradition where the father of a girl would shove a shotgun in the face

of the man who had shotgun married his daughter and would ask the man ‘marriage or death, you decide’.

This was exactly like that.

There was only a single solution I could select right now.

“Wait a second, time out.”

I requested for a time out towards the untaught masses who were closing in on me, picked up the kid who was standing beside Saeyeon,

“I’ll be a bit late.”

opened the door,

and ran away as fast as possible.



I am well aware of the reason why Saeyeon fantasizes about the idea of having a family of her own.

It most likely couldn’t be helped. Even her parents, at this very moment, behaved as if they were still on their honeymoon even though their daughter had grown up this much.

Since they’re a family that immediately marks the day of their family anniversary first whenever they buy a new calendar.

However, those sorts of happy families weren’t the only things that existed in the world.

For example, there was my household. Different from Saeyeon who was born in a happy family and was able to monopolize her parents’ love, my family wasn’t capable of being like that.

It wasn’t anything impressive. My double-income parents put their

all into their own respective jobs and, after awhile, that seriousness became severe and they ended up marrying their own jobs.

They said that something like getting a divorce would just interfere with their work so they didn't do it, and after being dispatched to a branch in a foreign country, they never came back.

Of course, they had completely forgotten about me who was a middle schooler at the time.

I had thought that it would be okay since I, in truth, lived by myself anyway ever since I was little, but because I didn't even have any money for living expenses, it was incredibly hard on me for a while.

It was Saeyeon's parents who had offered that me a **job**.

———Since it's Jaro, who's like a son to us, we'll help you if you look after Saeyeon.

Saeyeon's parents normally weren't home that often.

And whenever they weren't, sticking next to Saeyeon and looking after her was my **job**. Wake her up in the morning, make her food, make her study, help her with her homework, etc etc. I had led Saeyeon around since pre-school and looked after her throughout elementary school, middle school, high school, and even now, during my 2nd year of high school, so it wasn't a difficult job. I received my pay properly as well.

Within that context, it's about what happened yesterday.

Sunday had arrived, so I was spending my time working on the improvements of 'Maid Robot Mk. III Multi' throughout the day.

"What's the problem....."

Of course, it wasn't working out well.

“Move, Multi! Why aren’t you moving?!”

Due to my frustration, I shouted with a voice that contained the sadness of a scientist.

I had thought that it was a fated meeting.

During the start of the previous winter break, on a snowy day, Multi was lying down in a pitiful state within a pile of trash.

While looking at me with a sad gaze that was saying ‘Someone pick me up, please. I don’t want to be thrown away like this.’

———This is honestly, really bad…….

At that time, Multi was in a state that I couldn’t bear to look at with opened eyes. The previous owner must have used Multi quite roughly as there were barely any undamaged spots. Even Multi’s pretty appearance was dirtied. Multi was quite literally in a condition that could only be thrown out.

However, that gaze which was pleading for help, I didn’t have the heart to ignore it.

I was also in the need of some new research material.

Thus, from that day forth, our days together started.

I bought all sorts of parts, pulled all-nighters for her, and after using my head to the point of possibly going bald, I used up all of my free time throughout the entirety of my winter and spring break in order to pour every ounce of my energy into fixing the broken Multi.

Regrettably, the results weren’t good.

If things had gone according to my plans, then she should have returned to her original state and be smiling brightly at me right now.

“Oh, you don’t have to show such sad eyes, Multi.”

In response to her gaze that appeared as if she were worried that I was disappointed in her, I spoke thoughtfully.

“It’s okay. It’s all my fault for lacking in skill. But don’t worry. I’ll definitely fix you…….”

That’s right, as a scientist, there’s no such thing as failure. Everything is merely a step towards success. Scientists are people who do not fall because of reality but instead overcome it with the strength of their rationality. As my life teacher, Edison had once said, geniuses are 99% hard work and 1% inspiration.

“Jjaro……. Are you not going to sleep yet?”

While I was in the middle of my thoughts, Saeyeon appeared at the doorway of my room while rubbing her eyes. I was coincidentally starting to feel stiff anyway, so I answered her while stretching.

“I’m not. Why? Are you planning to sleep now?”

“Yeah…….”

“All right, then go back and properly brush your teeth and take a bath before you go to sleep. I’ll come and wake you up in the morning tomorrow. Ah, make sure you sleep under your blanket.”

Since she had a weak constitution, even when she was little, she’d always catch a cold whenever she’d go to sleep with her stomach revealed. If that happens, then it’d only be bothersome for me.

“Um, hey……. Jjaro…….”

As I was thinking about that and was about to return back to my work, Saeyeon’s hand carefully grabbed onto the edge of my clothes.

“……Can, can we sleep together?”

I let out a sigh and turned around.

“Ja Saeyeon, you’re a high schooler now, right? Can’t you sleep by

yourself?”

Saeyeon looked at me with a pressing gaze. I let out another sigh, grabbed Saeyeon’s shoulder, and spoke.

“You’re going to have to sleep by yourself for a month. I’ll properly go and wake you up in the morning tomorrow, so go to sleep. If you have a scary dream and let out a scream, then I’ll go to you. Okay?”

“B-But…….”

In response to my words, Saeyeon spoke in a whimpering tone.

“I-If something happens, then if you’re already with me, I wouldn’t have to call out to you…….”

For this girl to give this sort of logical request. I was a bit surprised.

“A-And…… Jjaro, you said that you’ll take responsibility…….”

No, if you say it like that, then doesn’t the meaning seem a bit weird? When I said that I was going to take responsibility, I meant that I was going to properly look after you for a month.

“Hm? Jjaro…….”

Saeyeon spoke in a whimpering and charmingly whining voice.

The hand that was grabbing the edge of my clothes was fidgeting.

The gaze that was directed towards me was vaguely trembling.

Well, she’ll probably fretfully call out to me over and over again until she eventually gets tired and falls asleep. I also don’t want to keep going back and forth.

Therefore, I let out a last sigh and nodded my head.

“Fine. It’s just for today, okay?”

“Okay!”

Saeyeon smiled brightly.

Yeah, it's Saeyeon after all. Since it's Saeyeon, a girl who sleeps early in order to be a good kid that receives presents from Santa Claus, as long as I go along with her adequately, she'll fall asleep quickly. I'll go back home when she does.

With that thought in mind, I laid down next to Saeyeon.

“Y-You're there, right?”

“Jjaro, y-you're there, aren't you?”

“Are you there?”

“T-Tell me!”

.....But why isn't she sleeping.

“Yeah, I'm here! I'm here! Go to sleep!”

“O-Okay.....”

In response to my annoyed shout, Saeyeon lifted her blanket up to her face.

However, before even 5 minutes could pass, Saeyeon's eyes shot back open.

“Jjaro, you're really there, right?”

“Ah, seriously!”

Even a saint like myself would have no other choice but to blow up in annoyance at this point. I roughly turned my body around and faced Saeyeon.

“Stop messing around and go to sleep! Why do you keep calling out

to me?!”

“B-But…….”

After raising her blanket up so only her eyes could be seen, she spoke in a whimpering voice.

“I-If I close my eyes, it feels like you’re going to go home, Jjaro…….”

……This girl, only her instincts are sharp. No matter how you look at it, it seems she had read my mind completely.

Regardless, Saeyeon is a high schooler as well. She’s been able to sleep by herself well until now, but what’s up with her today? With that thought in mind, I was about to say something to Saeyeon, but after seeing her gaze, I swallowed down my words.

……Yeah, her parents weren’t going to be home for an entire month, this is the first time that this has ever happened.

Should I say that it’s as expected of the parents that gave birth to Saeyeon or should I say that they still emit the aura of newly weds? They go on trips together whenever they feel like it. With the mentality of ‘Play, play, play. Play since we’re still young’.

This time, they went on a trip to Europe for a month. Under the pretext that it was their 10 year wedding anniversary.

Since Saeyeon was my **job**, they left her with me since I had said that I would take care of her.

Because their daughter was this Saeyeon, they usually never left home for longer than a week. So it’s not like I don’t understand why she’s afraid.

Ah, was it perhaps because of that? Did they want Saeyeon to get used to being by herself a bit?

What should I do? I unconsciously licked my lips. This meant that I was feeling troubled. Don't misunderstand.

Saeyeon is also a high schooler. If you look at it from another perspective, then it's the perfect time for her to get used to being by herself. Although it's honestly late. No, it's really late.

Although I'm uncertain whether Saeyeon's parents were thinking along these lines or not, if that were indeed the case, then cold-heartedly ending it here and going back home to sleep would be the correct decision. I can't possibly sleep together with her for an entire month, and I can't possibly stick together with her at all times either.

However, despite that, if I leave this kid, who's only a high schooler on the outside, by herself and just go home to sleep, then I'd end up feeling bad.

Thus, I came to a conclusion. Just for today. Today only.

"Then we just have to sleep while holding hands."

And then, in reaction to my words that I had uttered without much thought, Saeyeon's cheeks became so red that they were visible even in this dark room, and felt as if they might start glowing soon.

"H-Hold hands and sleep?!"

Wow, so radiant. She was so bright that it felt like the entire room was glowing red. Rather, for the human body to be capable of emitting light, just what kind of body structure does she have? What's her energy source? It's to the point that I want to try analyzing her.

However, more than that,

"J-Jjaro, you're serious, right? Right? I'm not hearing things, right?!"



What's up with her all of a sudden?

“Yeah. If we do that then you'd be able to know if I'm beside you or not. Do you not want to?”

“N-Nononono! I-It's not like I don't want to…….”

Saeyeon flailed her hands after hearing my suggestion before bringing the blanket back up to below her eyes and muttering in a small voice.

“But, isn't it too soon for that……?”

What's too soon? The moment I gazed at Saeyeon with a sour look, I came to a realization.

Moist eyes and voluptuous lips were directed towards me.

Moreover, underneath that thin layer of pajamas, her slowly heaving bosom.

“Are we really, seriously…… going to sleep while, holding hands……?”

Saeyeon was looking at me with eyes that were filled to the brim with a certain type of expectation.

Question. Describe what the boy and girl will do after the following conversation.

A: Hey, I'm scared…….

B: It's okay. You trust me, right? Let's hold hands and sleep, just hold hands. Okay?

Answer:

I grabbed onto Saeyeon's cheeks and shouted as loudly as I could.

“Really! I swear on my name! We’re only going to sleep while holding hands!”

A man like me, a prodigy scientist who was born in this age.

A neighbor who parents could trust and leave their daughter in the hands of for a month.

A guy who had watched over Saeyeon’s growth since pre-school.

The girl who was lying down beside me…… was not a mature high schooler who was only in her pajamas.

I have thrown away something pitiful like sexual desire, an emotion of the untaught masses.

I’m not sensing Saeyeon with my sense of touch and vision.

If I look through the eyes of my mind, then the person lying down next to me was just a trembling child.

More than anything else, Saeyeon trusts me.

“N-No, but……. Uu, uuuu, uuu…….”

Saeyeon groaned for a while before she eventually nodded her head as if she had made her resolve.

“O-Okay. If Jjaro, wants to, then……. I was also actually waiting for this day to arrive…….”

“Wait. Why are you lighting candles?”

“T-That’s because……. If it’s dark, then it’d be scary…….”

“Why are you also turning on music? Rather, have you always liked this sort of cheesy songs? Are you still scared even though I’m going to be holding your hand while you sleep?”

“I, I also need time to ready my heart. As I thought, I think the

mood is important for this sort of thing…….”

Ready her heart? Mood?

“Hoo~. Haa~. Okay. I-I’m all ready, so!”

While her face was still bright red to the point that it seemed as if she still intended to light up the room with it, Saeyeon muttered in a barely audible voice while only showing her eyes from underneath her covers.

“So……. I-I’ll be…… in your care.”

What the heck kind of care is this girl talking about?

À À À

It was that sort of ‘in your care’.

Thus, the result of that incident was that some random, adorable little girl was found sleeping in the same bed as us. Claiming to be our daughter.

Even though we slept while only holding hands.

However, I won’t lose here.

Real man, Jin Jaro, the genius scientist of this age. Although I’ve been denying reality until now, I’ve come to the realization that that wasn’t the right stance to take.

If you’re a scientist, then you must accept reality and come to a rational explanation and analysis that befits that reality. A man like me, an outstanding man who uses his failures as stepping stones.

That’s right, I shouted a line that belonged in the ‘Top 10 lines that scientists want to shout at least once in their lives’.

“I knew something like this would happen, so I’ve come prepared!”

“.....Dad, what is this?”

The kid poked at the headband that had cat ears attached to it as if it were uncomfortable, but I pretended to not notice. The design……. Whatever. I’ll just say that it’s a mistake that was committed by my younger self.

“Kid, do you know what a lie detector is?”

I gave an explanation as I also tuned the lie detector which I had painstakingly dragged all the way here.

“That device is designed to detect the brainwaves of its wearer and react to it. Therefore, if you lie, then I’ll know immediately.”

“Wow, were you the one who made this, Dad?”

“The technical prowess that this body is capable of is the greatest in the world after all.”

“But there sure are a lot of interesting things here~!”

This girly just coolly ignored me.

The kid must have found the club room, which was filled with all sorts of devices, to be interesting as she was looking around the room with sparkling eyes. Well, it probably does look intriguing in the eyes of a kid.

A half-neglected warehouse that was located outside of the school building.

The club room of the ‘Creative Science Club’. My hideout.

In consideration of spies, the inside of the room was dark since I had blocked the windows with curtains. Various tools, parts, and pieces of equipment were organized in an orderly manner on the racks that were completely covering the wall. The countless number

of inventions that I had invented up until this point were all lying dormant here as they waited for the day that they'd be used for the sake of developing humanity.

“Good, the circuits are alive.”

Although I'll probably get in trouble if I get caught skipping class here, that wasn't a problem. At this rate, my life was already going to end.

There was only a single solution.

I had no other choice but to definitize the fact that this little girl wasn't my daughter.

.....What? This is a rational explanation and analysis, isn't it? It is.

“Okay, kid. Let's begin.”

“.....”

The little girl pouted and stuck out her lips in response to my words. She was being uncooperative.

“What, are you dissatisfied with something?”

“..... It's 'Jaim'.”

How fussy. That's probably a name that Saeyeon just stuck on you at random.

“All right, then, Jaim. Let's begin.”

“Okay!”

I just have to endure for a bit longer. That's it. For starters, let's make sure it's working properly. If she lies, then the ears will react by twitching and perking up.

“Try telling a lie.”

“You’re handsome, Dad!”

Twitch^[2].

“Out of all the lies you could have said, why’d you pick that?!”

“You look young, Dad!”

Twitch.

“I am young, you know? I’m an active high school student!”

“I love you, Dad!”

Twitch.

“This kid, how could you say such cruel words with such an innocent smile on your face?!”

My life gauge is already at 0! She’s picking a fight with me right now, isn’t she? That’s right, isn’t it? Okay, then let’s try asking a straightforward question.

“Who are you?!”

“Your daughter!”

The cat ears, didn’t react.

“.....”

Since she lied the ears should have reacted and perked up.

Who knew that despair would feel this heavy.

No, there’s no way that’s possible. If perhaps, although as a scientist I don’t want to make this sort of absurd assumption, if she really was my daughter who was born because I slept while holding hands with Saeyeon last night, this girl was an elementary schooler. Even if you ignore the fact that the initial 10 months were skipped, if she grew up

this much within a single morning, then the field of infant care would have ceased to exist a long time ago. The world would be at peace, too.

“As expected, I have no other choice but to judge that this device is broken…….”

Talking to yourself is a privilege of scientists. I’m not crazy.

“It’s okay, cheer up, Dad.”

Tap, Jaim placed her hand on top of my shoulder. Yeah, I have to cheer up. The evil hand of the world may encroach me…….”

“Owowowow!”

I twisted that hand!

“Be quiet, kid! How dare you try to ride along with the atmosphere!”

I grabbed the shouting kid’s shoulder and unleashed the emotions that I had held inside me ever since we discovered this girl in the morning.

“Who are you?! What’s your goal?! What organization are you a spy for?! Tell me right this instant! If it’s now, then there’s still room for negotiation!”

“D-Dad! It hurts! It hurts!”

I let go of her hand and shouted while looking straight at her.

“Tell me everything straight out!”

“Uu……. Dad, my arm hurts……. Blow on it…….”

“Shut it. You only need to apply spit for something like that and it’ll get better. That’s why! Answer my questions!”

“Then, Dad……, you didn’t believe that I was your daughter……?”

She mumbled in a low voice that was seeping with disappointment.

“Even if Dad told me to get out earlier, even if Dad said you’d pay me to leave, I still believed in you, Dad……. But did Dad not believe in me?”

“Thinking logically, do you think I’d believe you?”

“Then you won’t unite with Mom?”

“……Like hell we will!”

I slammed my hand down on the table and spoke while making the most intimidating face that I could.

“Stop with the lies and tell me the truth!”

“But it is the truth. I came here so that you would unite with mom.”

Jaim muttered while pouting.

……Wait, came here?

“Haa. As I thought, does it not work on people who know……?”

As if she had a headache, no, as if she were upset that things didn’t go as how she had planned, Jaim muttered while placing her hand on her forehead.

“……What?”

That’s why I couldn’t help but turn my head towards Jaim.

It wasn’t because of those words. Jaim, no, this kid’s way of speech…….

“What? Did you think I was an innocent and adorable daughter?”

That's too bad."

Her tone was no longer charming and slightly coquettish.....

"There's no way you'd have that kind of daughter, right?"

As if she were teasing me, mocking me, a strange feeling of superiority and enjoyment was now mixed into her tone.

"Who, exactly.....?"

By that voice which barely felt as if it belonged to a little girl who looked as if she were merely in elementary school, I had even forgotten that I was the one standing above her until now.

Rather, fear had crept up on me.

Even though we only slept while holding hands, the kid who was sleeping in the same bed as us in the morning.

The unknown kid who claimed to be Saeyeon and my daughter.

If you think about it again, she might not be a person I should have freely harassed and shouted at. If anything, she was someone I should have been afraid of.

"Who are you exactly?"

After hearing my voice which had faltered unintentionally, Jaim smiled.

"If Dad wants the truth, then I'll tell you the truth."

However, that smile was different from any of the previous smiles she had shown until now.

If the smiles she had shown before were the smile of a dog that was wagging its tail, then her current smile was that of a cat that was slowly waving its long tail.

With a peculiar smile that couldn't be read on her face, Jaim spoke.

"I'm your daughter from the future, and if mom and dad don't unite, then the future will be in danger."

Even now, the cat ears weren't reacting.



".....Let me get this straight."

As a result of squeezing my head which had been busy buffering, I was barely able to follow along. I placed my palm against my forehead and spoke.

"In the future, I end up marrying Saeyeon and having a kid with her. Since Saeyeon kept crying and making a fuss about your name, we named you Jin Jaim. Then, although we were living happily, I had a big fight with Saeyeon one day and Saeyeon ended up leaving. And the reason behind her leaving was me?"

"Yup. That's right."

Jaim nodded her head while grinning widely.

Throughout the entire time she was explaining this to me, the lie detector that Jaim was wearing didn't react even once.

"Then all of the times you acted like an adorable child until now, it was all a trick?"

"I didn't really want to do that in front of you, but..... I can't show this attitude in front of my kind and gentle mom, now can I?"

Don't make a cute face and wink at me. It's contemptible.

"In any case, you said the future would be in danger but is it only to this extent?"

“What do you mean ‘only to this extent’?!”

“It is, isn’t it? I had some hopes since you said that the future was in danger.”

Something like another world war breaking out because of a time machine, annihilating a kid who’s destined to become the leader of the resistance in the future, it should be things like that.

“At any rate, I’m not simple enough to be taken in by such a small scale issue…….”

“You get fired.”

“……Why are you telling me this now?!”

Isn’t the scale crazy huge?!

“Um, well……. Yeah! After breaking up with mom, you fall into a state of despair and aren’t able to work properly, so you end up getting fired. Afterward, Dad, you said ‘What’s the point when my life is already like this’ and you start a world war. So in order to stop you who had become like that, I, who had constantly been waiting in an orphanage for the day that Mom and Dad would come and pick me up, came to the past like this in order to change the future.”

“What do I have to do in order to prevent that crisis? I’ll do anything! Anything I say!”

Once I shook Jaim by the shoulder and shouted at her, Jaim smiled broadly and spoke.

“Then I’ll tell you the method, so you have to do exactly as I tell you to, okay?”

“All right! Tell me the method!”

“You have to unite with mom.”

“…….”

The cat ears were perked up. They've been perking up since earlier.

"You tricked me, huh?! You lied to me, kid?!"

Jaim's eyes shined for a moment.

"Guaaaaaak?!"

She bit me?! She's even chewing?!

"Uggrgrggrrrrrrr!"

"Aaaaaack! At least let go before you talk! Don't talk while you're biting me! Hiyaack! Don't grind your teeth either!"

"Tweh."

Jaim spat on the ground as if she had just put something really dirty in her mouth.

"You're a dummy, Dad! You said that an issue where our family is on the line was 'only to this extent', and yet you got fooled by this kind of lie! Do you have no sense of responsibility, Dad?"

"Something pitiable like a sense of responsibility is a value of the untaught masses. It doesn't suit me.Wait, don't bite me. It was my mistake."

"In any case, you have to act properly, Dad!"

Act properly? What am I doing?

No, rather than that.....

Although Jaim was narrowing her eyes like an angry cat, the cat ears weren't reacting at all.

That's right. Finding a random kid sleeping in the same bed as you after waking up, logically speaking, this wasn't possible. Since she was quite literally there the instant we woke up. There's no way that my

perfect device was broken either.

“Then, in the small chance, the itsy bitsy, tiny chance…….”

Although I couldn’t believe it.

“Did you really…… come from the future?”

Once I asked her that in a trembling voice, Jaim displayed a smile that was so bright that it was incomparable to anything she had shown before and spoke.

“Yup! I’m Mom and Dad’s daughter from the future!”

Deeply moved tears were sparkling in her hope-filled eyes. That’s right, our daughter. I was wrong. Let’s get along well from now on.

“In any case, Jaim, can I ask you one thing?”

“Yeah? What is it? Ask me anything!”

After seeing Jaim hit her chest proudly, I asked her a question while filled with expectations.

“What’s this week’s lottery number?”

“I don’t know!”

“…….”

Okay. Once more.

“Then did you bring anything from the future?”

“Nope!”

“…….”

I grabbed Jaim’s cheeks with both of my hands and shouted.

“You foooooool! If you came from the future, then you should have brought something profitaaaaaaable!”

“Ubububububu?!”

All right, fine. Putting those aside for now.

“Where’s your time machine?! By what principles does it operate with?! Quantum mechanics? Gravity distortion phenomena? Top dimension? Wormholes? Does it use the twin paradox? Tell me now! No, that’s not right. Hand me the time machine!”

“Ubu, aa, aa! ii hurs, ii hurs!”

What is ‘ii hurs, ii hurs’ supposed to be? Let’s let her go for now so she can talk.

After rubbing her cheeks and glaring at me with tear-filled eyes, Jaim spoke.

“Uu……. That’s not what’s important! Thinking about what you should do in order to not break up with mom is more important!”

“I don’t care about something trivial like that.”

“……What?”

I coolly spoke towards Jaim whose mouth was hanging agape. I’m a cold city scientist after all.

“What kind of person wouldn’t get excited when they find out that time machines exist?! That’s every scientist’s dream!”

Although the majority of theories until now claimed that time travel was impossible, the fact that the lie detector wasn’t reacting right now meant that it was possible. It’s something I made after all. There’s no way that there’d be a mistake. If there was, then the theory was wrong. If that’s the case, “If I’m able to create a time machine, then my name would be written down in history! No, I

could control the entire world!”

If that happens, then even my ambitions would become a reality!

“.....”

“Now then, my daughter, hurry up and tell me! If I’m able to control the world, then I shall be generous and give you half. Take your father’s hand and let us rule the world, my daughter!”

While displaying a smile that befitted a man who was going to soon rule the world, I stuck out my hand. Jaim looked at that hand and slowly extended her own.

Good. That’s right. That’s what you should do if you’re my daughter.

Jaim grabbed my hand.

She then put it straight into her mouth.

“Didn’t I tell you to not bite me, kiiiiiiiiaaaaaaaaaaack!”

“You’re not worried about how you’re going to unite with mom, but you’re more concerned about something weird! No matter how bad you are, I didn’t expect dad to be this kind of person!”

“Quiet you! There’s no way that Saeyeon and I would end up like that in the first place!”

That’s right. Saeyeon was still a child who didn’t understand the meaning behind the words ‘I like you’. Her words were at the level of a pre-schooler shouting ‘I’m going to marry him when I grow up!’. I wasn’t foolish enough to be tricked by something that’s usually said at least once to a friendly oppa that lives next door.

In response to my shout, Jaim pushed her thumb against her cheek and winked.

“Don’t people normally say that oppas^[1] become appas?”

“Don’t say something so dreadful with such an innocent expression on your face.”

Her true nature was scary. There’s nothing this girl’s incapable of saying, sheesh.

“But in the end, Dad, you said that kind of line because you wanted to commit the no.1 method of ‘virginity escape’ with mom, right? You even made up an excuse like sleeping while only holding hands. It’s okay. As your daughter, I’ll approve of it. I’ll go to sleep early today, so don’t worry and go as far as you want. How about Hong Kong?”

“I refuse.”

While grabbing onto the edge of my clothes while I was turning off the lie detector and starting to clean up, Jaim peered up at me with sparkling eyes and spoke.

“Dad, don’t be like that. It’s your daughter’s one and only wish. Hm?”

“Whether you’re my daughter or not, if it doesn’t help me, then I don’t care.”

Every minute and second was already precious when it came to achieving my ambitions.

“In other words, if it’s something that’s helpful to me, then I don’t have any particular reason to not help you. The condition is simple. Does it help me or not? If you’re my daughter, then shouldn’t you help your father a bit? Hm?”

“So, what you’re saying is…….”

Towards Jaim who had spoken after her sparkling eyes had settled down, I showed an amazing smile that befitted the man who had the ambition to rule the world and answered her.

“Yes. If you give me your time machine, then I’m capable of treating you like my daughter. How is it? Isn’t that a good deal?”

“.....Dad.”

Jaim glared at me with cold eyes.

“You’re completely awful.”

“If you don’t want to, then that’s fine. I have nothing to lose.”

“.....”

“If that’s too difficult, then you can just hand me the information regarding what principle the time machine operates with. It’s one of the principles I mentioned earlier, isn’t it? I’m right, aren’t I?”

Jaim looked at me with a pitying gaze in response to my words.

“.....Dad, think about it.”

“What?”

“How would I know something like that?”

.....

“.....Right.”

Now that I think about it, how would a girl, who looks like she’s still in elementary school, know something like that?

“.....So you’re useless.”

“W-What do you mean by useless!”

“If something isn’t helpful to me, then it’s useless!”

After hearing my shout, Jaim asked a question while blinking her clear eyes.

“Then, are you not going to unite?”

“I already said I wouldn’t!”

“B-But……. You, have to…….”

Eventually, I was able to hear her start sniffing. All right, I made her cry. When in an argument, you lose if you cry, kid.

“T-Then…… my, happy family planning, won’t be, able to succeed……. Mom and Dad, will end up splitting apart…….”

Family planning doesn’t refer to things like that, kid. Things like planning on how many kids you want are what family planning is.

“Dad…… sniff, you have, to help, if you don’t, then…… if Dad, doesn’t help…… then I have no more options…….”

“Cry all you want, kid. My mind won’t change even if you do.”

“Hu, uuk, hii, uu, uuuuaaaaa! Huaaaaaaaang!!”

I told her to cry all she wants, but she really is crying as if the country is going to be destroyed.

There’s no need to turn around. There isn’t. Whether she cries or not, I just don’t have to pay attention to her. Something like an unhelpful kid, it’s over as long as I just leave her alone.

But, then…….

“……Ah, really.”

This is why I don’t like kids. They think everything will be solved if they start crying. If they’re left alone, then my side would end up being the villains.

“Oi, kid.”

I ended up turning around.

“Ah…….”

And I made eye contact with Jaim who was applying tear drops.

“……Ehehe☆”

“Ehehe☆, my ass, you kiiiiid!”

“Ubububu! B-But, Mom told me that a girl’s tears were weapons…….”

“My foolish child! You were deceived by that! Thank you for the tip! From this day forth, I won’t trust a woman’s tears!”

I wonder if it was because she was young, but her cheeks were so soft that they went beyond feeling like rice cakes and were quite pleasant to the touch. I might get addicted. That’s why I’m going to pull on them until I get bored, little missy!

“I-It hurs, daa! M-My cheeks are going to stretch! Ububububu!”

“I’m pulling on them so that they would!”

For this clever kid to be my daughter, that sort of future, I’ll fix it! Like this! Like this kid’s cheeks!

“In the first place, you should take this problem to your Mom and Dad! Not the me right now! But the me of the future!”

“B-But what am I supposed to do when dad doesn’t listen to me?!”

Indeed. There’s no way that the future me would do something bothersome like that. The very fact that I had united with Saeyeon was already suspicious.

There’s absolutely no way that the current me would do something like that.

“Even Dad from the future said ‘go ask the past me!’”

“That bastard!”

How dare that pathetic human, who failed at conquering the world and got fired from his job, do that!

“Wait, then there’s no need for it to be the current me, right? Go more into the future!”

Yeah! There’s no reason for it to be the me right now. I’ll believe in the me of the future and leave it in his hands. I trust you, future me. Delay today’s task to tomorrow.

“I originally planned to go a bit more in the future, around the time after Mom and Dad got married.”

“But?”

Jaim, who was rubbing her cheeks which had become red due to my pulling, gave me a wink and spoke.

“But there must have been some sort of problem since I was sent here. So, since I’m already here anyway, I have no other choice but to make you two unite at a young age and give birth to me, right? Dad who committed a shotgun marriage has to properly take responsibility ☆!”

“You trying to ruin someone’s life completely?!”

Do you know how horrid and terrifying this is? I don’t know. What is this girl? She isn’t clever, she’s just scary.

“That’s why you have to do it, Dad. Just close your eyes and go wild. Okay? It isn’t even difficult. You don’t need any technique, you just have to make it an established fact with your vigorous youth. You can think after you’ve done it!”

“How many times do I have to tell you that I won’t do something that isn’t helpful to me?! Why do I have to do something so bothersome? Why me?!”

“Because it’s something that I must do.”

Jam stuck out her chest boldly and spoke.

“The daughter has to protect the peace of the family!”

Peace of the family, my ass. You’re a little devil who’s harming my peace.

20XX-February-7th. Clear Weather☆

Please circle
today's weather.



I asked Jjaro to make breakfast since Mom and Dad weren't home today. Jjaro sourly said he'd make fried rice, but he added a lot of vegetables. Jjaro is bad. But when I said that I wouldn't eat it, he made me Salisbury steak for lunch. He might actually be nice.

It strangely tasted like vegetables, but Jjaro said he didn't know anything about it.

Lately, Jjaro keeps saying that he's busy so he refuses to play with me. After making food, he goes straight back home and doesn't come out. Even though I asked him why he was busy when it's winter break right now, he answered "You don't have to know". I acted upset and pretended to go home, but when I peeked through the door, he was playing with a toy by himself and kept saying things like "Multi-chan, haa haa" "As I thought, this curve is kawaii". I don't know what he was saying, but when I barged in saying that he should play with me if he's just going to play by himself, I got in trouble.

Really, Jjaro doesn't know how to be honest.

Translator's Notes

1. [↑] **‘Oppa’** is the term used when a female is referring to a boy who’s slightly older than them. **‘Appa’** means Dad.
2. [↑↑] Sound effect for when the cat ears perk up.

2. Intensified

“Hey, baby daddy! Did you have a nice trip to Hong Ko……
Guaaaaaaak!”

Break time. A guy entered the classroom while smiling refreshingly and sticking his hand out towards me. I also smiled refreshingly back at him and slammed the door shut as hard as I could. His hand became like a squid that was placed on top of a grill.

“Yeah, what brings you here? I’m all ears.”

“Huugyiriiiyaak!”

“Mhm, that’s good news. What happened next?”

“I-I’m sorry! It was my mistake! Spare me, Jjaro! Really!”

“……I see you haven’t repented enough.”

“Guek! Okay! Okay, I get it! My wrist is going to break!”

Thud. I stepped out into the hallway after opening the door and spoke down to the person who was rolling on the ground while holding onto his red and swollen wrist.

“Anyone who messes around with a person’s name is destined to receive their just deserts. They’ll really receive their just deserts! Oi, Shin Nanda!”

“J-Jjaro^[1], you’re also furtively messing around…….”

It must have still hurt since Nanda’s hand was still shaking while he was glancing up at me.

Shin Nanda. That was this fellow’s actual name. A classmate whose name had as much bad taste in it as mine did. He was also in the

same class as me last year. Although we were in different classes this year, he'd visit my class like this whenever something happens.

Last year, as a result of there being two people with names like Jin Jaro and Shin Nanda in the same class the day school started, we ended up being known as the 'Really Exciting' combo within the school since we hung out together.

It seems he didn't have a hobby of staying laid down on the floor in the hallway as Nanda shook his wrist and stood up.

"Auh..... I'm suing you! What are you going to do if I'm no longer able to hold a mic?!"

"Do you only stir soup with that left hand of yours?"

Befitting of a guy who dreamed of being a trot singer in this day and age of the 21st century where that was no longer trending, it seems he was more worried about his future than he was about the pain in his wrist. How praiseworthy.

"Even though I came to visit since I heard something interesting....."

"If you're talking about Saeyeon, then I'll make it so that you don't have to worry about that future of yours."

After I said that to him, a grin appeared on his unctuous and yet admittedly handsome face, displaying his sparkling white teeth to me.

"Yeah, I heard you finally said something like 'You trust me, right? Let's sleep while only holding hands.' to Saeyeon."

"Oh, want me to kill you?"

"I thought you'd get in trouble for being late, but after the teacher heard about what happened, he didn't seem to care. Jjaro, you really are a man, huh? Even though you said something like 'H-Hmph! Since Saeyeon is just like a little sister to me, she's nothing more than

that! D-Don't misunderstand!', the two of you, who have finally realized what your true desires are, embarked on your holy missions.....”

“Keep it down to a single line, okay?”

“I never thought that you would so faithfully uphold the old saying ‘oppas will become appas’..... You have my respect. Mhm, mhm.”

“Yeah, I’ll respectfully beat you up. Really, exciting.”

This guy doesn’t know how to stop his mouth even though he was warned. On a side note, why are you saying the exact same line as that kid?

Nanda chuckled in response to my words and spoke.

“Well, that’s enough jokes for now. So, what actually happened?”

“She said she’s my daughter from the future.”

“.....If she said something like that, then she’s definitely your daughter.”

Yeah. I knew he wouldn’t believe me. Even if I spoke honestly, I’d just be treated as an insane person. Putting that aside, this guy..... Nanda must have thought that that was a joke as he smiled pleasantly and spoke.

“You’re the biggest topic of interest in the school right now. There are even bounties going up for information.”

“.....Really, this is why the untaught masses are.....”

European SF novelist, Douglas Adams, once said ‘Nothing travels faster than the speed of light, with the possible exception of bad news, which obeys its own special laws’. This was just like that.

The moment I came back to the classroom with Jaim, the rumor that ‘I had a daughter’ had already spread throughout the entire

school, so there were all sorts of people who had come to have a look.

Additionally, I gave the middle finger to the broadcasting club that asked if they could interview me, and I drew a nice picture for the newspaper club that came looking for an autograph. With my ability as a scientist, I dismantled every phone that was taken out in order to take pictures into 17 parts.

“I’ll buy you lunch, no, I’ll buy you lunch twice, so can’t you give me the details? I won’t tell anyone.”

“You planned to tell someone the instant bounties were put up.”

“As expected of Jjaro. You won’t be fooled by something like this.”

As I thought, should I deal with this guy first? The instant that thought went through my head, the back door to the classroom opened.

“Jjaro? What are you doing out here……? Ah, Nanda, hi!”

“Hey. How’s it going, Saeyeon?”

Nanda smiled refreshingly towards Saeyeon who was raising her hand and smiling brightly.

“……H-Hello…….”

“Oh, so you’re Jjaro and Saeyeon’s daughter, huh? Hi.”

And he also smiled towards the little devil that sprung out from behind Saeyeon. She’s really hiding her true nature. While ignoring me who was gnashing my teeth, Jaim hid behind Saeyeon and acted bashfully.

“Haha, she’s hiding her face. What’s her name?”

“Mhm! Her name is Jin Jaim! My and Jjaro’s daughter!”

“……I see you have the same naming sense as his dad.”

As expected, it seems Nanda had a lot to say about Saeyeon's naming sense as well, but he just lowered himself to match Jaim's eye level and grinned.

"My name's Shin Nanda. I'm Jjaro's friend. Let's get along, okay?"

Once Jaim heard Nanda's self-introduction, she opened her eyes wide as if she had just heard something unbelievable and mumbled.

"Shin..... Nanda?"

"Yup. Shin Nanda. It's an interesting name, right?"

"Why are you introducing yourself amicably? It feels like you're trying to hit on her."

I felt annoyed for some reason and kicked Nanda's butt.

"Uuk..... Jjaro, you, I did expect you to become a doting dad once you got a daughter, but isn't this too much?"

"I'll kill you! I'll really kill you this time!"

"Bad! You shouldn't say something like that to your friend!"

I was hit by Saeyeon. Though it didn't hurt this time.

"But what brings you here, Nanda?"

"I came here to see Jjaro. Ah, am I perhaps interrupting your family meal time?"

Saeyeon smiled and shook her head at Nanda's words.

"No, it's okay. Ah, do you want to eat with us, Nanda?"

Yeah. We were eating together. With the little devil. I'm not sure whether the food was going in my mouth or in my nose.

It couldn't be helped you know? I wasn't particularly afraid of the

watchful eyes of the untaught masses, but be that as it may, if I try to bury this devil or get rid of her, then it's obvious that the same will happen to me.

While I was grumbling that, I heard a voice near my ear.

“Then is that cute girl really Underclassman Jin Jaro's daughter?”

“Don't talk like that all of a sudden, it's annoy……. Huh?”

The moment I turned my head, there was another person's face right in front of my own and was barely a nose length away from me. I became startled and backed away.

The face with sleepy-looking eyes blinked slowly and smiled slightly at me, making it emit a loose and warm atmosphere. Including the lacrimal point, the person had an intensely mature charm to them.



Her wavy hair was splendid as it brilliantly curved, and below those.....

“.....Oh, oh.....”

Oh dear, why do I salivate whenever I see them?

That part of the body couldn't be expressed by using just words, sizes, or comparisons. Those sorts of expressions would be an insult to those breasts. Watermelons? Basketballs? Water balloons? How foolish! How could you compare these with those sorts of objects? That would be an insult to perfect beauty!

In times like this, big and beautiful, this was more than enough.

Furthermore, large and beautiful things have their own gravitational pull. I'm not sure if you know what universal gravitation is. That's right, it's like Newton's law that involves an apple falling from an apple tree. That strength is directly proportional to the mass of the two objects multiplied together and is inversely proportional to the square of that distance.

Although my hand's mass was small, the mass of the large and beautiful things was massive.

Additionally, the distance between my hand and the large and beautiful things was small.

Then there's no other choice but for a gravitational pull to occur, right?

That's right, this hand was merely following that law. It was a force of nature that couldn't be helped. There's no way that I could defy it.

“Grawr!”

Due to the pain that traveled up from the ends of my fingers, through my cervical vertebrae, and to my brain, my hand was able to

defy that force of nature. Once I gnashed my teeth and looked down, Jaim gnashed her teeth as well, with my fingers still held between her teeth. Oi, those are my fingers! Again, this again?!

“This girl is your daughter, right?”

In response to those words that were asked while poking at Jaim’s cheek, Jaim released my fingers. Ah, it hurts. There’s a mark. It’s swelling.

“.....Dad? Do you know this person?”

The poking finger must have been bothersome, as Jaim was making a face as she asked that.

“My introduction was late. My name is Ha Nabom.”

Upperclassman Nabom smiled and answered Jaim before I could even reply.

Upperclassman Ha Nabom.

The upperclassman who had transferred to this school earlier this year and was the only other member of the ‘Creative Science Club’ alongside me.

If I were to summarize her using other people’s words, then———a charming person who emits a mature atmosphere and is always smiling, a kind person who speaks formally to everyone, a ladylike person who’s overflowing with an elegant aloofness.

“Underclassman Jin Jaro, although it’s fine when we’re by ourselves in the club room, you mustn’t parade our relationship like that outside. People will misunderstand.”

“.....Upperclassman Nabom is the one who shouldn’t say things that may cause misunderstandings.”

Moreover, she was severely eccentric.

“But big sis^[2] Nabom, what brings you here all of a sudden?”

After Saeyeon asked that question, Nabom stopped poking Jaim’s cheek and stood up properly.

“I heard that Underclassman Jin Jaro had abandoned me and made a family of his own, so I have arrived here in order to uncover the truth.”

“Jjaro, you, what have you been doing with Upperclassman Nabom while in the club room?”

“I merely advanced scientifically.”

“Mostly within the field of biology. To be more precise, about the difference between the male and female bodies…….”

“Can you stop with the silly jokes?”

Nanda is actually laughing over there. Really, that guy…….

“Therefore, Underclassman Jin Jaro, can we talk for a moment? There’s **something important we must discuss between the two of us.**”

“……**something important,**”

“……**you have to discuss,**”

“……**between the two of you?**”

……Their timing was perfect. Is a dragoon being mobilized?^[3]

Upperclassman Nabom smiled and nodded at the combo play done by Nanda, Saeyeon, and Jaim.

“Yes. That’s why, Underclassman Ja Saeyeon, I’ll be borrowing Underclassman Jin Jaro for a moment. We won’t be long. Now then, shall we go?”

I shrugged my shoulders in response.

“All right, I guess.”

“.....Dad?”

“.....Jjaro?”

It couldn't be helped. She said it was 'something important'.
'Something important that must be discussed between the two of us'. For some reason, my instinct as a genius scientist was whispering to me that I have to agree here.

“T-Then I'll go as well!”

“This is a talk for adults. Kids aren't allowed to follow.”

Towards Jaim who quickly shouted and grabbed onto the edge of my clothes, Upperclassman Nabom told her sternly while still smiling.

“T-Then, I'll.....”

“I apologize, Underclassman Ja Saeyeon. As I said, it's **something important that must be discussed between the two of us**. Pardon us for a moment.”

Similarly, Upperclassman Nabom spoke sternly towards Saeyeon as well.

“B-But.....”

While Saeyeon and Jaim were unable to say anything more, Nabom turned towards me and smiled.

“Shall we go now?”



“Underclassman Jin Jaro, you followed me surprisingly obediently. It should have been rather abrupt for you.”

“This isn’t the first time Upperclassman Nabom has been abrupt.”

Once I answered like that when Upperclassman Nabom turned to look at me, she chuckled.

I’ve known her for about a week now.

If there’s one thing I was able to evidently learn during that time, then it’s the fact that this person is definitely eccentric and does things suddenly.

Our first meeting was like that as well.

Earlier this week, on the day of the opening ceremony, while I was spending my time by myself in the club room since it must have been lonely by itself throughout the break, the club room door was opened with a slam.

Then, along with a bag that was thrown into the room, a loud shout came in as well.

“Receive a new recruit!”

Even I, who wasn’t easily startled, ended up being caught off guard.

After looking at me, who had frozen in place, the invader of the single room tilted her head and corrected herself.

“Hm? Was this not it? Then…… come hither!”

“…….”

I took off my glasses. I adequately massaged my temples. I furtively cleaned my glasses with my shirt, and after putting my glasses back on, I sincerely questioned the person.

“Are you perhaps the Crazy X of this area?”

“Those are rather harsh words for one’s first meeting.”

With a tone that sounded as if she didn’t care, the person laughed and spoke.

“I came here since you had recruited me. Though you had never recruited me.”

“No, well…….”

It seems I was lacking in sincerity. With all of my heart, I questioned her once more.

“Who are you?”

The person smiled in response to my question.

“Nice to meet you. My name is Ha Nabom. You can refer to me as Upperclassman Nabom. You’re Underclassman Jin Jaro, correct?”

“Yes. That is the case, but……. Ha Nabom?”

A lightbulb lit up in my head once I heard that name.

Although I disliked things like rumors, different to the uneducated masses, even I had heard of that name. That there was a weird upperclassman among the third years.

“I see. Nice to meet you. Goodbye.”

So I decided to not care.

“I see you’re exactly as the rumors had described.”

Upperclassman Nabom sat down on a chair in the club room while coolly ignoring my blunt way of telling her to go away.

“I’ve taken a liking to you. I will join the club. Mm, let’s see……. ‘H-Hmph! I-It’s not like I particularly want to join the club! I-I’m joining because I just want to join……. D-Don’t misunderstand!’.”

“No, like I said…….”

This can't go on. My words weren't getting through to her at all. The world is vast and is filled with Crazy Xs so I ended up meeting a formidable rival. Upperclassman Nabom folded her arms and, while making her bre……chest, which had their own gravitational pull, stick out more, she spoke.

“Honestly speaking, I'm interested in you, Underclassman Jin Jaro.”

“……I-Interested?”

I wasn't particularly enticed by this. Upperclassman Nabom giggled and nodded. Due to that action, I was able to observe the principle of action and reaction in the large masses.

“Yes. I heard that you were a similar type as me. Different from the regular, untaught masses, I heard that you were a solitary, lonely, and elegant scientist who has a world of his own. That you were the greatest prodigy scientist of this age, an outstanding man.”

“W-Well, something obvious like that! Hu, huhahahahahaha!”

This person is more okay than I expected. Doesn't she have a good eye for people?

Upperclassman Nabom stretched her hand out towards me who was laughing heartily.

“I wish to learn under that impressive Underclassman Jin Jaro, so will you allow me to join?”

“Of course! When I conquer the world one day, I'll give you half!”

I firmly grabbed Upperclassman Nabom's hand and exclaimed.

……I know. If I think about it now, I was completely fooled at that time.

Despite saying all that, she had negotiated with the school faculty at some point and, saying that she was the upperclassman, took my seat as the club president. I'll get her back one day.

"In any case, what did you mean by **something important that must be discussed between the two of us**? Though I am grateful that you got me out of there."

Putting my thoughts aside, Upperclassman Nabom must have thought that this spot was sufficient since she stopped at the back side of the school where people rarely came, so I took this opportunity to question her.

Yeah, it's good that I was able to get away since, if I had stayed there, I would have definitely been teased since Nanda, Saeyeon, and even the kid were all there. I have no idea what this girl plans to tell me after creating this kind of atmosphere, but I'm not going to expect this person to do the classic thing normal people would do in this sort of situation.

Upperclassman Nabom then spoke.

"Take off your pants."

"....."

"....."

".....Pardon? What did you say?"

"If I smell it, then I can tell if you had truly slept while only holding hands or not."

I didn't even have a chance to react. No, I couldn't react. The fact that I had grabbed Upperclassman Nabom's hand, which was reaching out, was done entirely instinctively.

"W-What are you doing?!"

“I should be the one asking that. Do you intend to sleep while holding my hand as well?”

“No, that’s not it! W-Wait, for starters, let go of my pants!”

“Will you take it off if I let go?”

“No! Why would I?!”

“Then I won’t let go.”

“Kya! Kya! W-Why is this woman being so obscene?!”

“Obscene? I’m merely trying to take off your pants and smell it.”

“That’s what’s obscene! Uhiik?! W-Wait, where are you touchi, huak?!”

“I see that your flanks are your weakness, Underclassman Jin Jaro. I shall keep that in mind.”

I, who was dancing an elegant dance while placing my hands on my waist, ended up facing my defeat after I was assaulted by Upperclassman Nabom’s tickle attack on my sides.

Defeat meant, well, that my worn-out checkered pattern trunks, that was nearly frayed after having been washed many times now and was overflowing with life, was displayed, before the entire world……!

“Hmhm, hmhm. ……Mm? This scent!”

Upperclassman Nabom’s eyes opened wide as she spoke.”

“……It smells like you really did only sleep while holding hands.”

“Uuhuuk, uhuu……. I, I can’t get married anymore…….”

Upperclassman Nabom stood up without hesitation, completely ignoring me who had his pants around his ankles and weeping, and,

while wiping her nose with a handkerchief as if there was something unpleasant on it, she spoke. It was an obvious course of action to take, but it hurt for some reason.

“As I thought, there’s no way a child could be made by just holding hands and sleeping. If that’s the case, then the other method……. Mm, at any rate, it doesn’t seem like you did something that would get you criticized if you did it while underage either.”

“Obviously! More than that, what exactly are you doing?!”

Towards my shout that I had uttered instinctively without even remembering to pull my pants back up, Upperclassman Nabom answered. Uh, this is the first time I’ve seen her open her eyes properly. Her eyes are big.

“I was confirming something. It was as I had expected.”

“What did you confirm?”

“If going through proper procedures, then there’s no way that a baby could be made by just holding hands and sleeping. I’m certain that there’s some sort of conspiracy hidden behind this.”

Upperclassman Nabom nodded as if she were saying something obvious. She kept nodding, seemingly proud of herself for having come to that conclusion.

I was about to also nod my head as well, but I was just barely able to regain my senses. That’s not right, I shouldn’t be nodding here!

Upperclassman Nabom must have been pleased as she clenched her fist, returned back to having half-closed, sleepy-looking eyes, and spoke confidently.

“As I thought, this is the deed of aliens.”

“…….”

No, what should I say, mm? Before anything else, I learned that you couldn't feel any drive even if someone were to declare something confidently while their eyes were half-closed.

Upperclassman Nabom gave me a sidelong glance as if she wanted me to agree with her. I'm not sure how well my blank expression worked on her, but Upperclassman Nabom returned her gaze to her clenched fist and paused for a moment.

Shortly after, Upperclassman Nabom's eyes sparkled again.

"As I thought, this is a conspiracy done by the Institute."

"....."

"....."

"No, even if you look at me with such genuinely disappointed eyes....."

What does she expect me to do?"

".....Dimension, shifting?"

"Even if you ask that as a question....."

It appears she was genuinely dejected now. I felt sorry for some reason.

"I've been waiting for this sort of special situation. I've read through all sorts of books and prepared myself while forming theories. The circumstantial judgment for the algothirm that I had made, is it wrong?"

For starters, it's 'algorithm', not 'algothirm'.

"Homunculus?"

"I told you earlier, even if you ask me that....."

“Android?”

“Nope.”

“Another species?”

“That’s not…… is it?”

“Something from your imaginations?”

“It’d be great if it were!”

“Time travel?”

“Bingo!”

……Ah.

“……Bingo.”

Yeah. If you shine your eyes like that while opening them properly and clenching your fists, then it feels plausible. ……No no, this isn’t the time to be feeling satisfied with Upperclassman Nabom’s growth, is it?

“No, when I said ‘bingo’, I was pretending to have traveled into the future to a time when you finally got the answer…….”

“I understand what Underclassman Jin Jaro means.”

Upperclassman Nabom nodded her head and continued.

“In other words, the little girl named Jin Jaim claimed that she had come from the future in order to prevent Underclassman Jin Jaro and Underclassman Ja Saeyeon from breaking up. It is just as I had predicted. It seems an abnormal life has finally come to me as well.”

“Would you listen to me……?”

She had gone completely into a delusional state. She was probably

in her own little world and with that algorithm or whatever of hers.

.....Hm? Wait. Now that I think about it, something is strange.

While glancing at Upperclassman Nabom who was clenching her fists and giving a long speech about her mission to search for an encounter with the abnormalities that existed in the world, I carefully asked her a question.

“Uhm, by the way, upperclassman.”

“What is it, Underclassman Jin Jaro? I wish to fully enjoy this delight I feel for finally being able to experience what I have always wished for.”

“How do you know about that?”

I most definitely didn't say a single word about the kid's goal.

“.....”

She froze. She was completely frozen. Her half-closed, sleepy-looking eyes were vaguely trembling. The edges of her mouth were twitching. A cold sweat had formed on her forehead.

“I-It's a misunderstanding. I wasn't dispatched here in order to do something like monitor.....”

Monitor? Dispatched?

I unconsciously started to sweat just like Upperclassman Nabom.

No, it can't be. Surely, surely it wasn't.....

“.....I'm not from the future.”

“You're really just revealing everything by yourself!”

“I originally planned to reveal everything.”

That was a lie. She was going to lie to me until the very end. In response to my sharp rebuttal, Upperclassman Nabom snorted, stuck out her chest, and spoke.

“Anyway, Miss Jin Jaim is also quite hopeless. Because she had so casually revealed her identity, I had no other choice but to reveal mine as well.”

“So you really did plan to hide it!”

“In any case, let me formally introduce myself.”

Upperclassman Nabom looked at me and lowered her head.

“My name is Ha Nabom, a Time Officer of the Time Management Department. I am currently surveying the unauthorized, illegal time travel that was done by Miss Jin Jaim, Underclassman Jin Jaro’s daughter.”



“.....I knew it, it’s just as I had expected.”

At that moment, I heard a voice behind me so I turned around.

“I felt like I smelled something suspicious since earlier, but it’s just as I thought.”

“.....Kid, why are you here?”

From the other side of the school building, Jaim was glaring this way. Even though she was a little kid, her ability to display murderous intent from her eyes was at an expert level. It’s scary if you do that. No matter how much Upperclassman Nabom was.....

“.....Wait, how long have you been there?”

Her focal point was on something weird. Me.

In response to my words, Jaim's face, which was already menacing, become even more contorted.

"A guy who makes a girl smell his underwear. Pervert."

"Don't summarize it!"

"Say that after you've pulled your pants back up. Disgusting. I'll report you."

"Dooooooooon't?!"

Now that I look at it, the situation had been dire so my pants had slipped my mind?!

"I'll tell mom about dad's exhibitionism later."

Please don't. I beg of you.

"Why are you approaching my dad?"

While no longer gazing at me who was lifting up his pants at the speed of light, Jaim stomped forward and stood in front of Upperclassman Nabom. Upperclassman Nabom answered.

To me.

"I currently have the task of supervising Miss Jin Jaim, your daughter. Protection of a minor, since my task is to supervise, it'd only be right for me to give an explanation of the situation to the guardian.Yes, this should be a good enough reason."

She was nodding while convincing herself. This person's self-justification was peerless. But I'm also a minor. No, rather than that.

"You really came from the future?"

"Yes. I really came from the future."

"Then Jaim is?"

“Yes. She is Underclassman Jin Jaro’s daughter.

“.....W-Wait! Don’t ignore me! I asked you a question first!”

“Hey, the adults are talking right now so can you go somewhere else, little girl?”

.....Wow, she cut her off just like that. She didn’t even turn to look at Jaim.

It seems the sight of Upperclassman Nabom solely looking at me and answering the questions while not even turning the gaze of her sleepy eyes must have flipped Jaim’s switch.

“You’re the one who should go away, you weird girl who pulls down a boy’s pants and smells his underwear! Don’t try to squeeze into our family business!”

Your eyes are completely turned. Your true nature is going to come out. The white part of your eyes is terrifying.

“You too, Dad! Move away from her!”

Due to Jaim’s action of grumbling as she increased the distance between Upperclassman Nabom and I by placing herself in between us and stretching out her arms, upperclassman Nabom finally let out a sigh and looked at Jaim.

.....With a murderous gaze that didn’t seem possible with her half-closed eyes.

“Little girl, this big sis is going through all this hardship because a certain kid acted however she pleased, you know? She time traveled illegally, she went around spreading rumors about her identity, and she manipulated memories..... Do you want to be scolded? Hm?”

“H-Hiik......”

“H-Hiik......”

This side is more terrifying. Jaim and I ended up unconsciously pulling each other into a hug. Upperclassman Nabom smiled once more and spoke. Like I said, this is more terrifying, you know?

“Well, for now, since Underclassman Jin Jaro is the guardian, you decide. Whether you wish to discuss this while this little girl is present or if you’ll chase her away.”

I’m not her guardian. Jaim looked up at me with wet eyes while trembling. It wasn’t particularly because of this, but, “.....I’m not really sure what’s going on, but if it’s related to this kid, then wouldn’t it be better if she hears it as well.....?”

“.....Well, if that’s what you want.”

For some reason, Upperclassman Nabom made a reluctant face. Though I might have just been seeing things since her sleepy-looking eyes were still half-closed. Upperclassman Nabom glanced at Jaim and spoke.

“Then let’s follow procedures first.”

“Ow!”

“Ow!”

Tears came to my eyes for an instant. Upperclassman Nabom had suddenly plucked Jaim and my hair. A single strand from Jaim and several strands from me.

“What was that for?!”

“W-What are you doing all of a sudden?!”

“I plan to confirm your paternity with my work terminal. It’s possible to do so as long as I have a single strand of both of your hair.”

“Then take only a single strand! Give me back my hair!”

Upperclassman Nabom ignored my cry and took out something that looked similar to a cell phone from her pocket.

“Honestly, although I was able to retrieve a strand of hair from Miss Ja Saeyeon in the future, I was unable to retrieve Underclassman Jin Jaro’s strand of hair.”

“Pardon?”

“Ah, sorry for the spoiler.”

.....I’m not even sure what kind of expression I was making.

“Surely, I’m not.....? It’s a joke, right?”

“.....”

Please don’t make an expression that looks like you don’t know what to say. Please don’t. No, it can’t be. My hair is strong. It’s strong, I say. Kid, why are you turning your head away? Kid. Hey.

“I apologize. I’m unsure as to what sort of face I should be making in this kind of situation.”

“.....I think, you have to smile.” (Jaim)

“That’s right. Then let’s say that it was a joke.”

.....You shouldn’t smile like that. Let’s just erase this from my brain for now. I don’t need this sort of unnecessary data.

Upperclassman Nabom put Jaim and my hair into the cell phone-like device

Target: Jin Jaim

Sample: Jin Jaro (Father)

Biological child percentage: 100%

“You’ve confirmed it now, right?”

Kid, don’t look at me with that confident ‘I told you so’ gaze.

No, rather than that.

“W-Wait a second! Even if that were the case, Upperclassman Nabom clearly transferred to this school at the beginning of this semester! But this kid appeared today!”

“As expected, Underclassman Jin Jaro is as stupid as he appears.”

Wow, I was told that I looked stupid right in my face. Even though she had plucked a bunch of my hair. Even though she had taken off my pants and sniffed my underwear. You’re the first girl to do these kinds of things to me.

“The moment I traveled through time was after Miss Jaim had traveled back in time. So it was possible for me to travel further back than that. Do you understand?”

Ah, was that the case? Since she’s coming back to the past from the future anyway, she can arrive at a time before Jaim had arrived.

“Well, although there’s the method of memory manipulation like this little girl had done, the aftermath of that isn’t good. Really, what were you thinking…….”

“Huh? Memory manipulation?”

Upperclassman Nabom nodded in response to my question and glared at Jaim. Due to her giving another murderous gaze, Jaim hid behind my back.

“Logically speaking, there’s no way that people would believe that someone woke up and suddenly had a daughter, right? There’s no way that they would accept it that easy either.”

“…….”

“What’s the matter?”

“.....No. Because of the usual reactions, I felt incongruous.”

Right? I didn’t do anything wrong, right? I was being slandered, right?

“Don’t cry.”

“I’m not crying! It’s merely the sweat of the innocent! Ah, then even Saeyeon.....!”

“No. That isn’t the case for her. It doesn’t work on the people who know Miss Jaim in the future. In any case.”

Upperclassman Nabom smiled brightly and continued.

“For that reason, I’ve been constantly keeping a watch over Underclassman Jin Jaro.”

“You’ve been constantly watching me..... until now?”

“To be exact, I haven’t done anything that’s even remotely close to violating the local laws like stalking, planting hidden cameras, wiretapping, or location tracking. Since the wiretap that’s in your desk drawer is definitely not used for that purpose, be at ease and leave it there.”

“You are doing all that! I’m going to tear that out the instant I return to the classroom! You stalker!”

“Ah, then at the very least, please don’t remove the camera in your bathroom at home. That was expensive.”

“Kyaaa?!”

“All things considered, if it’s the thing that I saw in the video, then there was no actual need for me to have suspected whether you really did sleep while only holding hands or not. For someone like that to make me smell something weird, Underclassman Jin Jaro, you’re a

pervert, aren't you?"

"I was called a pervert by the pants removing and sniffing person who took hidden videos and stalked me?! Moreover, I was even belittled as a male?!"

Ah, I want to die. Should I just die? My will to live is being bent for some reason……. Even my hair……. No, I need to forget that last tidbit.

"So, why are you getting close to my dad?"

"In any case, Underclassman Jin Jaro, there's something I wish to request."

"Stop ignoring me!"

"———I wish to request for your cooperation in regard to Miss Jaim."

Twitch, my ears reacted to her words.

"Huh? Cooperation? What kind?"

"Underclassman Jin Jaro is also aware of what a 'time paradox' is, correct?"

"Well, yeah……."

As a scientist, something like that was on the level of being common knowledge.

In short, it meant the contradiction that occurs when one travels back in time and intervenes with something. If I go back in time and accidentally get my grandfather killed at a young age, then would I have been born? Like that.

Traveling from the future and to the past doesn't simply end as just a 'trip'. Since it means that a person, who originally shouldn't exist, is in that place, the smallest of actions could cause the largest of results.

“Then in order to prevent a problem like that from occurring because of Jaim?”

“Yes, something along those lines. Authorized time travels are dangerous as well, but unauthorized ones have an even higher chance to cause problems.”

Upperclassman Nabom nodded her head and looked at me.

“That’s why I require Underclassman Jin Jaro’s cooperation.”

I immediately understood what she meant.

“I see. Then it can’t be helped.”

“Dad?!”

In response to my words, Jaim opened her eyes wide and shouted.

“Dad, you’re going to join hands with this weird girl? Even though you refused me like that when I asked you for help earlier?”

“As a scientist, I can’t overlook this sort of problem.”

It’s like the duty of a scientist. A man like me is overflowing with a sense of responsibility.

“I’ll say this now, but I certainly do prefer them bigger. I’m faithfully following the passion I have as a massive missiles enthusiast. However, I’d like to establish now that that’s completely unrelated to this.”

“.....”

I said this before, but please don’t look at me with cold eyes like that.

“Furthermore, I can’t trust someone who lies.”

“But I never lied before.”

“You said that you didn’t bring anything from the future! If you have something like a memory manipulator, then conquering the world would be as easy as pie!”

‘Memory Manipulator’? Isn’t this a passionate technology?! But this kid……!

“T-That weird girl lied to you too, Dad!”

“Don’t blame others! If everyone dies, then are you going to follow along and die as well?!”

Before Jaim could say anything more, I declared.

“I don’t join hands with liars! Furthermore, I especially won’t join hands with a cheeky kid who keeps telling me to unite with Saeyeon!”

“……All right. If Dad is going to be like that, then I have a plan as well.”

Once I had made that declaration, Jaim, who had been looking at me with cold eyes until now, carefully distanced herself from me. I was worried since I thought she was going to bite me again.

“You’re going to regret this soon! Don’t think you’ve won with this!”

Jaim exclaimed and ran off.

“……What does she mean by win?”

What kind of parents did she have, really. I shook my head and turned back towards Upperclassman Nabom.

“Well, it can’t be helped since it has become like this. Keeping the peace and balance of the world is also a scientist’s job. I’ll assist you.”

Upperclassman Nabom smiled brightly after she heard my answer.

“Really? Thank you very much. I knew I could trust in

Underclassman Jin Jaro.”

“So, what can I do to help?”

“You have to **unite** with Underclassman Ja Saeyeon.”

“.....Why is everyone hanging themselves on that uniting business?!”

Wait, isn't this nothing different then?

“Well, let's set that as the sub quest for now.”

“Be it a sub quest or whatever, I don't need it! If it was illegal and unauthorized, then can't you just take her away immediately?!”

“Uhm, it's embarrassing to admit, but it hasn't been that long since time machines were invented, so the laws around them are vague. Although it may not be the case if Miss Jaim were to cause a problem in this era that's impossible to correct, I currently do not have the authority to use force. Laws are always like that.”

“You don't look even remotely embarrassed.”

“I'm a civil servant, after all.”

“Then work! Work like a civil servant!”

“I'm currently performing my official duties, you know? Why? What do you want from me? Do you have a problem?”

“She got upset at me instead?!”

“That's why, like a civil servant, the plan is to perform one's official duties by keeping watch on the side until a problem slowly occurs. The person keeping watch being you, Underclassman Jin Jaro.”

“That's why I'm telling you to work! Why are you passing it on to me?!”

“Don’t be like that Underclassman Jin Jaro. I don’t intend to make you do something difficult anyway. If Underclassman Jin Jaro assists me, then taking that little girl away will be faster for me as well.”

Upperclassman Nabom looked at me with sleepy eyes and continued.

“As I had said a second ago, I don’t have the authority to bring Miss Jin Jaim back immediately. However, if one of two conditions are met, then I can use force.”

“Two conditions?”

“If a problem occurs with Miss Jin Jaim as the cause, or if Miss Jin Jaim says that she wants to go back to the future first, one of these two conditions must be met. Additionally, these both require Underclassman Jin Jaro’s assistance. Thus, Underclassman Jin Jaro must act as a family with Underclassman Ja Saeyeon and Miss Jin Jaim.”

The instant I scowled when I heard that word, upperclassman spoke as if she were trying to appease me.

“There’s no need for you to think so much about this. Just think of it as **playing house**. You’ve been constantly doing so with Underclassman Ja Saeyeon until now, haven’t you?”

“.....How do you know that?”

“I know at least that much about your circumstances. I also did some research before I was dispatched here and I’ve been monitoring you until now as well.”

This stalker. Upperclassman Nabom happily smiled at me who was baring his teeth and continued.

“For your main quest, you just have to behave like a family and, while you’re humoring Miss Jaim, observe all of her movements and report them to me. If you do so, then since my job will become easier,

I'll be able to fully enjoy this time as I please, Miss Jaim will be happy since she'll finally be together with the parents she wanted to see, and Underclassman Jin Jaro will have a pleasant time as you spend it with your doe-like wife and bunny-like daughter."

Doe-like wife and bunny-like daughter, my ass. Aren't I the only one who's getting the short end of the stick? Did you come here as a tourist?

"You'll be lighting a cheongsachorong[\[4\]](#) anyway, so you should just clear your sub quest while you're taking care of your main quest. Of course, make sure you give a detailed report about what happened. Though I'll be watching through a camera anyway."

"Kyaa! Kyaa! I refuse! I won't clear this quest!"

"You won't be able to level up. As a man."

"I didn't plan to!"

".....Ah, my apologies. I didn't know you had that sort of problem..... Well, I did think that may be the case when I saw it....."

"What are you thinking?! Also, what did you see?!"

It isn't in that much poor health! Ah, no. I can't. I can't get caught up in her pace. I have to sternly cut her off here and refuse like a man....."

"Well, it's okay to refuse."

".....Huh?"

"Although, if you do, then I won't be responsible for what will happen later on."

What, is this? Is she threatening me? Regardless, I'm not a man who would get done in by a threat. I won't listen even if you pour ox

bone soup down my nose.

“Look, look! Mom! Dad is cheating!”

“.....Jjaro?”

Ah, right. There was this.

I turned my head. I didn't want to turn it, but I had no other choice. From the other side of the school building, Saeyeon and Jaim were standing at the corner of the building. The surprised Saeyeon, the triumphantly grinning Jaim, and, “Why are there so many people?!”

Behind them was a gathering of a bunch of people. It wasn't as small as a single class. Isn't that the entire grade? When I looked up, I saw a bunch of people looking down at us. Their gazes weren't something to mess with either.

“Jjaro..... Don't tell me, you're really.....?”

With a strangely trembling voice, Saeyeon asked me while stammering.

“Uh, you see, we absolutely weren't doing anything suspicious......”

And with a strangely trembling voice, I answered while stammering. Wait, why am I stammering? There's no need for me to be stammering. Well, I did hear this and that, but there wasn't anything weird.

“Don't furtively stick to my arm!”

Upperclassman Nabom spoke while linking her arm with mine and winking at me. It's not cute if you do that with those sleepy eyes.

“Oh dear, Underclassman Jin Jaro. Are you already bored of our relationship?”

“What sort of relationship is that?!”

“A relationship where things that should and shouldn’t be seen were all seen.”

“.....”

No, that’s not the truth. I haven’t seen anything. Although I’ve been enthusiastically looking at the large and beautiful things, in the end, I couldn’t see anything because of the clothes. Upperclassman Nabom may have seen everything that should and shouldn’t be seen, but I haven’t seen anything. Wait, isn’t this incredibly unfair?

“I see……. So it was like that…….”

“Wait, Saeyeon. I’m not sure what’s going through your head right now, but whatever it is, it’s completely wrong. In the first place, I don’t intend to judge someone by their physical characteristics. Yours are beautiful as they are. If anything, I believe that that size is the most beautiful. So don’t misunderstand and…….”

“Mm, it’s fine, Jjaro.”

Saeyeon shook her head and smiled.

That smile was so tender and beautiful that I had unconsciously held my breath. Was this girl always this pretty?

“Since I resolved myself to become a good wife.”

And, a single tear drop flowed down from one of Saeyeon’s eyes on her smiling face.

“So, since I’ll even understand, Jjaro for cheating……. Even if Jjaro…… does a one night stand with another girl…….”

While sniffing, Saeyeon continued.

“I’ll understand, as long as you don’t draw a map on your blanket,

so.....[5]”

“.....”

It was the first time I understood that those words could be heard with this sort of meaning as well.

Additionally, I also learned another thing for the first time,

That those words were going to call upon the end of a single person.

“How could you abandon such a good wife!”

“While you’re even in front of your daughter! You human trash!”

“Don’t talk badly about trash! He’s like radioactive waste!”

“Don’t talk badly about radioactive waste!”

They were flying towards me. All sorts of things were flying towards me. Even objects that would make someone have to wear a coat made out of a royal foxglove wood and be buried underground were flying towards me. I didn’t expect that I would be treated like this two times in a single day.

“As I thought, criticism from the masses is quite cruel. But it’s okay. Underclassman Jin Jaro. If it’s with you, Underclassman Jin Jaro, I can happily accept something like this.”

“This is all because of you, Upperclassman Nabom! Ow, ow! How are they able to hit only me?!”

With this sort of control, you guys should go to the Major League! While I was using only one arm in order to desperately protect my head since my other arm couldn’t move due to the universal gravitation, Upperclassman Nabom whispered into my ear.

“Now then, this is your last chance. If you promise me now that you’ll cooperate, then I’ll take care of this problem peacefully.”

“Fine! I’ll do whatever I can! I’ll do it! Please spare me!”

This wasn’t the time to be concerned about the aftermath. If I don’t do something immediately, then I might actually die here. After hearing my agreement, Upperclassman Nabom smiled and distanced herself from my arm.

“Everyone, it seems there is a misunderstanding so please wait a moment.”

Silence. Then, as if it were a lie, all of the verbal abuse and attacks stopped.

“Since the relationship between Underclassman Jin Jaro is not like that, there is no need to misunderstand.”

Ooh, it feels like it might actually be resolved peacefully.

“More than anything else, there’s no girl who would like a man who’s going to lose all of his hair.”

“.....”

Ah, damn it. I was barely able to forget about that. Rather, then does that mean I really..... Hey, don’t look at me with those sympathetic eyes. I said to stop looking at me with those pitying eyes.Please stop looking at me. I beg of you. Please, I’m begging here.....

“Furthermore, since Underclassman Jin Jaro and I merely have a physical relationship, you have no need to worry, Underclassman Ja Saeyeon.”

“.....”

Yeah, I’m the idiot for believing this person.

What is there to do in this sort of situation? I can only laugh. If you’re curious as to why you should laugh, then you should just

laugh.

“Ha, hahaha, hahaha…….”

“That bastard is laughing!”

……So I can’t laugh either.

20XX-March-3rd. Clear Weathers☆

Please circle
today's weather.



I'm in my second of year of high school starting from today☆!

As I expected, I'm in the same class as Jjaro this year as well. If you look at how we've

constantly been in the same class together since preschool, it must be destiny. When I said

that to Jjaro, he grinned and laughed. It seems Jjaro must be happy as well.

However, Jjaro said that a new member had joined his club today. 'A first year? Isn't that fast?'

when I asked him that, Jjaro made a face and gnashed his teeth as he told me that a

third-year upperclassman transferred to our school and suddenly took his seat as club president.

Seeing that he was mad that it was passed on to some weird girl even though it was his

department, Jjaro must be really upset. When I asked him what sort of person she was, Jjaro

contorted his face more. I wonder why? By the looks of it, I'll have to visit next time and see

what kind of person she is myself.

It's okay. We're destined☆partners after all

Translator's Notes

1. [↑] The MC's full name can be read as "Really" if you place a slight emphasis on the J in his first name. So, "Jin Jjaro". This word play has been in constant use almost every time you see someone say "Really" in a slightly strange way. The daughter's name is also similar since putting an emphasis on the J in her first name would make her full name mean "Seriously" or "is true". "Shin Nanda" doesn't even need an emphasis change, since just flat out saying his full name, without context, means "Exciting".
2. [↑] The '**big sis**' used here is just the term used when talking to a female who's older you. Nabom is not Saeyeon's actual sister.
3. [↑] Starcraft reference.
4. [↑] [Cheongsachorong](#) – A traditional Korean lantern.
5. [↑] Another way of saying wet the bed.

3. Clue

Like so, that first day of madness had passed and several days followed.

I'll tell you the results first.

Save me.

À À À

“This kid! Didn't I tell you to stop coming to school?!”

“Ehe. Sorry, Dad☆”

Don't attach something like a star to the end of your sentence. Don't wink at me while sticking out your tongue slightly in an attempt to look cute. My blood pressure is going up. I'll rip that tongue out.

Saeyeon's house. Even when I had purposely slammed the front door shut, this kid didn't even remotely appear as if she had cold feet.

Thus, I turned my arrow of complaint towards Saeyeon.

“Saeyeon, you! Didn't I tell you to stop bringing Jaim to school?!”

In response to my shout, Saeyeon lowered her eyebrows as if she were being scolded and responded.

“B-But……. It'd be boring if Jaim is all by herself at home…….”

“It’s not boring for me when this kid comes to school, you know?”

“I knew it! Dad also likes it when I come to schoo…… ubububu!”

“You really want to be punished, don’t you? You actually like it when I do this, right?”

“J-Jjaro! Don’t be harsh to our daughter! Bad!”

I let Jaim go because Saeyeon had hit me. Although it honestly didn’t hurt.

“In any case……. I told you several times already. If you bring this kid to school, then it’ll become complicated for several different reasons so you shouldn’t bring her.”

I’m slowly running out of excuses now.

On the first day of madness, the day ended with a three person talk with the teacher after school. No, it ended with a four person talk. It seems the ‘Memory Manipulator’ or whatever didn’t work as our homeroom teacher had called us to see him after school. Even before our homeroom teacher had called for us, my rear had already caught on fire because of the student supervisor and his broom.

“And you, kid, didn’t I tell you to say that we’re just relatives while you’re at school?!”

While in front of the teacher who was contemplating whether he should send us to the police station or not for having done a shotgun wedding, which was unprecedented in our school, but as expected of my brilliant brain, I was able to give an amazing excuse like ‘She’s a relative! She’s the third daughter of a regular in my first cousin’s second cousin twice removed’s neighbor’s store! She’ll be staying with us for a while!’. Although due to the law of inertia, I received 5 more hits.

‘Huh? That’s not true, Jjaro. She’s our…….’ from here, since I was able to properly stop Saeyeon from continuing her sentence and, ‘But

you really are my da…….', was able to hold Jaim's mouth shut, I was barely able to succeed in persuading our teacher, but the problems didn't end there.

"But Mom said that you shouldn't lie. Right, Mom?"

"Of course! You shouldn't lie, Jjaro."

"The teacher is going mad because you two are like that!"

Since he understood when I told him that 'Due to complicated family issues, she couldn't stay at her own home, so she'll be staying with us.' he concluded it by saying 'Then don't bring her to school'. However, every time this kid came to school, our homeroom teacher would grill me with questions like 'Are her family issues still not resolved yet?', 'How long is she going to be staying with you?', 'She's going to her own school properly, right?'.

The pressure is terrifying for various reasons when our homeroom teacher asks me those questions with teary eyes despite being a gorilla who doesn't even know what the 's' in 'science' means.

"Do you understand, kid?! If you come to school again then I'm really going to kick you out, okay?!"

In response to my words that I had shouted as I removed my shoes and entered the house, Jaim's eyes sparkled as she shouted back at me.

"But I have to keep an eye on you, Dad, so you don't cheat on Mom!"

"I said I wasn't! Do you know how hard it was on me because of that?"

Why is this girl, who is well aware of the situation, raising up the misunderstanding like this? I got in trouble today as well because she ran throughout the entire school spreading rumors that 'Dad is cheating!'.

“If that isn’t the case, then why do you keep meeting up with that weird girl?”

“Be quiet! It’s adult business. Don’t come!”

“No! If Dad doesn’t promise me that you’ll stop meeting up with that weird girl, then I’ll keep coming!”

“Till the very end, this kid!”

As I thought, I have to shut her mouth first. The happily smiling Saeyeon squeezed her way in between me, who was approaching Jaim while growling, and Jaim, who was making an unsatisfied face while also growling.

“Wait. It’s good that you two are getting along, but family members shouldn’t fight each other.”

“Do you see this as us getting along?”

“Yup! Mom told me before. She said that when people argue, it means that they’re that close to one another.”

While grinning brightly, Saeyeon turned towards Jaim.

“Right? You get along well with your Dad, don’t you Jaim?”

“Yup! We get along!”

Get along, my ass. Saeyeon sat down on the sofa and spoke.

“Now then, stop bickering and let’s watch TV together. Okay? It’s time for the drama to start. Jjaro, Jaim, sit down.”

After looking at Saeyeon tap on the sofa, I let out a sigh and sat down next to her. Yeah, I’m too tired to even say anything now.

“Mom, are you going to watch that drama today as well?”

“Yup. Mom told me to tell her what happens while she’s on her

trip.”

Click. Once Saeyeon clicked on the remote, the timing was perfect as the opening of the drama had just started to play.

“But Jjaro.”

“What?”

The instant I turned my head, Saeyeon asked me a question with sparkling and hopeful eyes.

“.....You really didn’t cheat on me, right?”

“The drama is starting.”



The drama that Saeyeon enjoyed watching was one of those so-called ‘Makjang^[1] Drama’. If I remember correctly, the title of the show was definitely ‘The Counterattacking Missus’. I’m not sure how it was enjoyable for someone whose mental age was that of a child, but she has been watching it every day without missing even a single day.

Every day at 7 pm, it was a drama about a husband who had abandoned his wife after having an affair, a wife who dreamed of getting revenge ever since she was abandoned, a man who was the 3rd son of a major company’s CEO, he was also single and would make the show disappointing if he didn’t appear, that man’s ex-girlfriend, etc etc. I was aware that even with this tangled plot, it received zealous support from the stratum of old ladies and, with its also destructive plot, it led a cult-like popularity. The reason why I

knew the exact details is because I've been constantly watching it with Saeyeon every time she watched it. Don't misunderstand.

[You're a foolish and old-fashioned person whose soul is trapped within the idea of marriage!]

[Your missus isn't some ostensible decoration!]

While I was absentmindedly watching the drama, Saeyeon pulled on the edge of my clothes.

"Jjaro, Jjaro."

"What is it now?"

"What are they doing right now?"

"As you can see, the man threw the food aside because it tasted bad. As I thought, a man needs to have at least that much vigor."

"Mom said that you shouldn't waste food thoughtlessly, though..... But why are they hugging each other and going on top of the table?"

"Since tossing the food wasn't enough to sate his anger, he's venting his rage by smothering the food below their bodies. 'This is my flesh that has become fattened because of this tasteless food!'. "

"Then why are they making weird noises while pressing their mouths together?"

"He's saying that instead of making food like that, the woman should just stop breathing. The woman is making weird noises because she's having trouble breathing."

"Why are they taking off their clothes?"

"Know some shame!' something like that."

"Ah, it's suddenly morning now, what happened?"

“Since the punishment that followed after that was too dreadful, they couldn’t show it to us. Mm, even if they omit it like this, it’s quite terrifying.”

“.....”

In response to my generous vocal explanation support service, Jaim was looking at me with an incredibly dumbfounded gaze. What is it now, kid?

“.....I’ve been curious since before, but..... is Mom acting like that on purpose?”

“Hm? What do you mean, Jaim?”

“No, I mean that’s.....”

“You’re loud, kid. Be quiet and concentrate on the drama. Whenever you watch something, you have to watch silently in order to not cause a disturbance for the people around you.”

I interrupted her in order to prevent her from talking nonsense.

More than that, I’ve been thinking about this for a while now, but how is something like this family appropriate enough to be aired at 7 pm? What are they going to do if kids watch this?

Well, in that regard, it’s okay since as Saeyeon’s guardian, I’m able to sit next to her and generously explain everything.

“Mom, they were actually.....”

“I said to concentrate on the drama, kid. Because of you, Saeyeon is becoming concerned as well so she isn’t able to watch properly.”

“No, it’s okay Jjaro. What is it, Jaim?”

“No. You have to properly admonish them when something like this happens. If you raise them without any concern, then they’ll grow up to become like one of those ruffians who turn their phones

on in a theater, kick the seat in front of them, and disturb the people around them.”

“That’s right. It was embarrassing when Jjaro fought with the person seated in front of us at the theater last time.”

“Right? But I’m all right. It’s troubling if you put someone like me in a collinear spot with those untaught masses.”

“Ah, in any case!”

It seems she must have realized that I was furtively trying to change the subject since Jaim quickly spoke up and talked to Saeyeon.

“Mom, did you not feel anything after seeing that scene a second ago?”

“What kind of feeling?”

“Uu……. L-Like…….”

In reaction to Saeyeon who responded in a completely clueless manner, Jaim spoke while sending quick glances at me. Like I said, what do you want, kid?

“……Mm, Mom, have you never thought about, doing that…… pressing your lips together thing with Dad?”

In response to Jaim who started that question sounding annoyed but then ended up hesitating because of her embarrassment, Saeyeon’s face became red.

“J-Jaim! You can’t say something like that!”

“Okay, but! So with Dad, do you want to…….”

“J-Jjaro told me before. That, uh, because of bacterias and stuff, you might die…….”

I couldn't help but laugh when I saw Jaim become rigid with her mouth held agape, making it evident that she was at a loss for words. You've underestimated Saeyeon too much, kiddo.

"So, why have you been glancing at me a bunch of time since earlier?"

If you have something to say, then say it properly.

"E-Even if Dad taught you that, Mom, h-have you never wanted to at least try it once?"

"Well, it happens a lot in manga and dramas, but..... Since Jjaro taught that to me....."

"Don't be like that, Mom. When a boy and a girl brings their lips together, it means they like each other."

"But Jjaro said that it means 'I'm going to suffocate you to death!'."

"Dad lied."

"Jjaro, you lied to me?!"

As if she were truly surprised, Saeyeon opened her eyes wide. However, if I were to panic because of something like this, then I wouldn't be Saeyeon's guardian.

"No. I didn't lie."

It's true. I never lied. It does mean that you'll suffocate them to death, doesn't it?

"Uu..... I don't know who's telling the truth....."

It seems I have to drive the nail in here.

"Ja Saeyeon, are you going to believe me or the kid?"

"Mom, do you think I'm lying?"

“T-That’s…… n-no, I don’t mean……. Auh…….”

Saeyeon must have completely gone into a state of confusion as she was holding her head and lowering it. Although I felt bad for her, it appears I was able to avoid the crisis for now.

“That’s it! Then Mom and Dad should press your lips together right now!”

“…….”

Wow, this is a new type of idea.

Jaim spoke to Saeyeon with sparkling eyes.

“Right? If Mom and Dad ki……press your lips together, then Mom will be able to know who’s right. You’ll know if it feels good or not!”

“That’s……right?”

Saeyeon blinked her eyes as she thought about Jaim’s words. At some point, those eyes that have been glancing at me were filled with expectation.

“Uhm, Jjaro…….”

“……Fine. If that’s the case, then let’s test it out.”

Science consists of experiments after all.

Both Jaim and Saeyeon’s eyes became wide the moment they heard my answer.

“Dad? What did you say just now? You’re serious, right?!”

“Jjaro? What did you say just now? Really?!”

“You’ll be able to know how pressing lips together is like if we do it, right?”

“N-No, of course, it’s good for me if Mom and Dad ki……press your lips together, but I didn’t think that Dad himself would want to…….”

“W-What should I do? Eh, uhm…….”

Both Jaim and Saeyeon’s cheeks became red as they turned their heads away and started mumbling to themselves. They’re having a blast, aren’t they? They’re the ones who wanted to do this in the first place. I took off my glasses and gently held the back of Saeyeon’s neck as I drew my face closer to hers.

“J-Jjaro?!”

“It’ll be over soon.”

“B-But, as I thought, I need to prepare my heart for something like this……!”

Without waiting for Saeyeon, whom I was holding by the back of her neck while she was flailing her arms, I pressed my lips against hers with the intent to make a loud ‘chuuuuuuu!’ sound.

“!!!”

“W-Woow……. For you to do it so calmly, I might end up admiring you……!”

Along with Jaim’s voice, Saeyeon’s face was at the peak of redness while her eyes were wide open and filled with shock.

“”Uub…….”

As if she had no idea what was happening, Saeyeon’s eyes became wider and wider, but eventually, she closed them slowly.

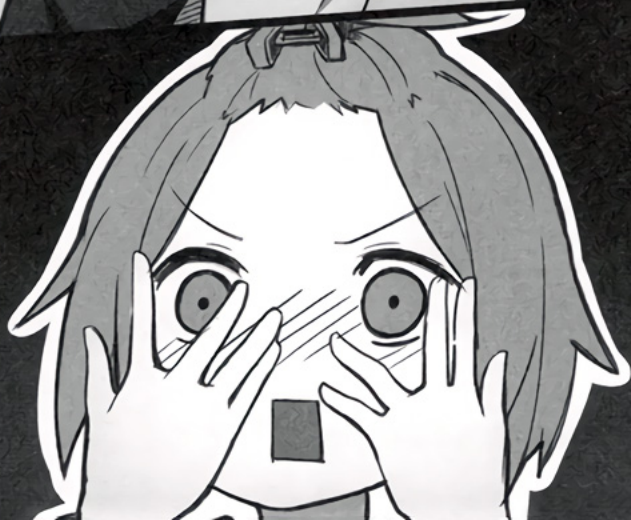
“Mmm……. Mm…….”

The warm sensation spreading from my lips. The smooth lips that were touching my own twitched and Saeyeon’s waving hands stopped moving and were then clenched into fists. The breathing she was

doing through her nose was tickling the area above my upper lip.

“.....Uub, uu, uuuub! Uuuuuuuub!”

She then grimaced and her cheeks became a shade of red that was different compared to before. Soon, her exhaling became rough as well.



“Uuuuuuuuuuuuuub! Puha!”

It seems I'm also running out of breath. Once I released the strength in my hand that was holding Saeyeon by the back of her neck, it was also around the same time Saeyeon had pushed against my chest with as much strength as she could muster. Saeyeon inhaled sharply and shouted at me with tears at the edge of her eyes.

“J-Jaro, what are you doing?! I almost suffocated to death!”

“See? That's what pressing your lips together means.”

“.....Huh?”

“.....Huh?”

Both Saeyeon and Jaim opened their eyes widely. I put my glasses back on and spoke.

“I told you so, didn't I? You nearly suffocated to death, right?”

“T-That's..... right..... huh?”

“That's what it means to press your lips together with another person. It's a battle to see who can hold their breath for the longest period of time, a fight to see who can make the other person suffocate first.”

While glancing at Saeyeon who was blinking her eyes vacantly and Jaim who was standing still with her mouth held slightly agape, I continued.

“Also, make sure to brush your teeth properly. I told you before, but there are all sorts of bacterias that live in people's mouths. Dentists are scary..... Since cavities don't heal on their own, a dentist will have to use a drill and ‘drdrdrdrdr’ grind out your rotten teeth by drilling into them, and the instant they give you a Novocain shot, the needle will burrow into your skin and.....”

“I, I’ll brush my teeth right now!”

Saeyeon must have recalled her previous trip to the dentist as her face had become pale. While I was watching Saeyeon quickly run off to the bathroom, Jaim, who was still standing blankly, slowly opened her mouth.

“.....Dad, you’re better than I expected.”

“Don’t think you can surpass me with that kind of flimsy scheme. Your intentions are as clear as day, you know?”

You were careless.

À À À

Once I walked out of the kitchen after having finished washing the dishes, I noticed Jaim sitting on the sofa.

“Did Saeyeon go to sleep?”

“.....”

I was coolly ignored by the kid. If I consider the time, then Saeyeon should have definitely gone to bed, but what is this kid doing up this late? Since she was ignoring me anyway, I approached her quietly to see what she was doing only to discover that she wasn’t ignoring me. It seems she didn’t even notice me at all. What a remarkable concentration skill. All right, let’s see what you’re so concentrated.....

“.....Oi, kid.”

“.....”

“Am I not speaking words to you?”

Smack.

“Ow! Uu……. What are you doing all of a sudden?! I died!”

“No, I didn’t hit you hard enough to kill you.”

Rather than that.

“You, what’s that you have there?”

“Can’t you tell by looking at it?”

While rubbing her forehead which had just been hit, Jaim stretched her arm out and showed off the item that she was holding. No, I can guess what it is just by looking at it, but that’s not the point.

“What are you going to do?! I could have beaten the boss if I progressed a little bit further, but I died because of you, Dad! Take responsibility!”

A size that was perfect to be held within one’s two hands. With a streamline curvature as its base, there was a large screen in the center and there were buttons located on both sides of the screen. This was that, wasn’t it? I like these kinds of things too.

“What game console is that? Where’d you get that from?”

It’s my first time seeing this model. Jaim quickly turned her head away and stared at the screen again before answering me.

“I brought it with me before I came here. I might get bored while I’m here after all.”

“Aha. So in other words, you’re telling me that it’s a game console that you brought from the future, right?”

“Mhm, if I remember correctly, it’ll come out in about 10 years.”

“I see. Kid, there’s something I want to ask you.”

“What? Because of you, Dad, I have to start again from the last save point. Do you know how long this is going to take?”

“Didn’t you say that you didn’t bring anything from the future?”

“.....”

Twitch, Jaim, who was staring solely at the screen, froze in place.

“I’m certain that I told you to hand over anything that could be profitable.”

“A-Are you some money-stealing delinquent, Dad?”

“Of course not. However.”

I grabbed onto Jaim’s cheeks before she could turn away and continued while pulling on them.

“Ububububububu!”

“For starters, you should have at least taken it out, kid! I follow the principle of ‘What’s mine is mine and what’s yours is also mine!’”

“Uu……. I-It’s obvious that it would have been taken away like this if I told you, Dad, so how could I?! Stupid!”

Jaim pointed at me with teary eyes.

“……Furthermore, you didn’t tell me that you knew Shin Nanda Oppa!”

“How is that related to this?”

“It is related! If you knew Shin Nanda Oppa, then you should have told me that sooner! I would have worn something prettier then!”

What is this kid saying all of a sudden? Was she shot in the head?

“In any case, why are you acting as if you know him? You’re even adding ‘Oppa’ to his name.”

“Do you know how famous Shin Nanda Oppa is?! Oh, right. Dad, I won’t go to school anymore so can you get me Shin Nanda Oppa’s autograph? Please?”

“Why do you want the autograph of some deadbeat?”

Towards me, who she was looking at as if I were pathetic, Jaim put more pity into her eyes as she gazed right at me. I’ll tear those eyes out.

“You know, Dad, if your friend is that famous, then you should try to get closer to him from now on. He becomes incomparably more famous than you, Dad, after all.”

“What?”

“In the future, you know, a ‘Trot^[2] Boom’ begins and it all starts because of Shin Nanda Oppa!”

.....

.....

“.....Huh? What did you say?”

What’s this kid saying? Rather, why are you puffing your chest out proudly as if you’re bragging about something?

“The superstar who appeared like a shooting star within the declining musical circle! Starting from his debut album, 〈Clanging Beer Glasses with You〉, which sold over 1 million copies in a week, he’s now a world star with a hundred million fans across the entire world!”

“.....Huuh.....”

“Do you know how cool Shin Nanda Oppa is?! While it’s unbelievable that he’s still in his 30s, he has good stage manners, amazing songs, and he’s even good at acting whenever he stars in dramas and movies! I was shaking so much when I went to watch his concert in person, but to be able to see him up close……. Ah, Shin Nanda Oppa……!”

Jaim’s eyes sparkled as she brought her hands together as if she were praying. That’s why I decided to ask her a sincere question first.



“Kid, when you came here from the future, did you bring any medication?”

“I don’t take something like that! You should try believing what your daughter tells you!”

“Everything you tell me lacks any credibility.”

Furthermore, this was even more unbelievable than the fact that I was going to make a family with Saeyeon.

“In any case, Dad! Get me an autograph, okay? Make sure he writes that it’s for his No. 1 Fan! No, that’s not right. I’ll go to school one last time tomorrow, so overlook it, okay? If it’s just tomorrow, then even if you fool around with that weird girl, I’ll pretend to not notice.”

“Don’t make me laugh.”

But for there to be a ‘Trot Boom’ in the future, I can’t imagine it. As I thought, isn’t this kid just saying whatever comes to her head?

.....No, wait.

“All right. You want me to get his autograph, right?”

“Hm? Yeah! Dad, are you really going to get it for me?”

In response to my words, Jaim approached me with glittering eyes. A brilliant smile was on her face. You, you’re way too close. Our noses are almost touching.

I smiled brightly and spoke.

“Now then, kid. You should have understood by now. What’s my principle?”

Her face instantly contorted. Honestly, it was an amusing sight.

“.....Dad. You’re going to put a condition on even a small request like this?”

“Obviously. There’s no reason to do something that’s unhelpful.”

More than anything else, even if I say that it’s for this kid’s sake, what’s Nanda going to say to me? He’s definitely going to make fun of me.

“I’ll get his autograph for you, so go home.”

“.....,,, No.”

She thought about it for quite a long time. It nearly worked too. That’s unfortunate.

“All right, then show me everything you have.”

“.....Dad, are you really some money-stealing delinquent?”

“Shut it. Right, I’m doing an inspection as your guardian to see if you have anything dangerous. Kid, you had a backpack with you when you got here, right?”

An inefficiently small and cute backpack at that.

“.....Fine. But it’s only for a bit, okay? I have to sleep soon as well.”

Although she sounded reluctant, she must have really wanted Nanda’s autograph as Jaim cautiously went to get her bag from Saeyeon’s room. Good.

Deal established.

“Let’s see here.....”

Although Jaim furrowed her brow when she saw me open her bag and spill its contents out, she didn’t react any further than that.

“.....There really is nothing.”

I was going to at least try dismantling that memory manipulating device but I couldn't now. While I was having those thoughts, I picked up an item that looked as if it had the most value. A notebook.

“.....Is this that thing?”

“Yup! That's my <Happy Family Planning>!”

Although I received a mental shock by just the cover from which I could clearly feel the childishness that was unique to little girls, I tried opening it for now.

<Happy Family Planning>

1. Mom and Dad love each other.
2. Mom and Dad unite with each other.
3. ???
4. PROFIT!!

“.....”

I felt like this wouldn't be good for my mental health if I looked at it any longer, so I closed the notebook.

“Whatever. The condition has changed. Hand me your game console.”

“That's not fair! I even forgave you with my large and generous heart for going through a girl's bag!”

“You don't have to. I lose nothing.”

Once she heard my words, Jaim immediately looked as if she were calculating something before letting out a sigh and speaking.

“.....Fine. It’s a promise, okay? You have to get Shin Nanda Oppa’s autograph, okay? Make sure he writes that it’s for his No. 1 Fan.”

“All right. I can do at least that much.”

Once I received the game console from her, Jaim leaned her upper body closer to me.

“I’ll tell you how to play it. So if you do this here.....”

Woosh.

The instant I moved the game console away from Jaim, who was stretching her hand out in order to fiddle with the console, she looked at me with blinking eyes.

Of course, I was displaying a smile that befitted the man who was going to rule the world.

“Wahahahahaha! You were deceived, kid! Did you think I was going to only play games? Too bad! When I said I was going to do something with it, what I meant was disassembling!”

Literally the left field! That was the path of a scientist!

“W-What are you doing?! Give it back! Give it back!”

“I was finally able to get my hands on future technology! Give up obediently!”

Although Jaim had quickly leaped over the sofa in order to make her way to my side, did she think she could win against our difference in height? Jaim started to hop up and down once I raised my hand high up into the air, but there’s no way she’d be able to reach it.

“Wahahahahaha! It’d be good for the both of us if you give up nicely, you know? I’ll get you your autograph as promised. Moreover, I’ll give this back to you once I’ve cracked it open and seen all of its inner workings! Thus, give up with this!”

Of course, even if it's the genius me, I can't confidently say that I'd be able to put it back together perfectly.

"H-How could you steal your daughter's game console and do such a thing?"

"It's always delightful to hear the cries of the defeated."

The once hopping Jaim looked up at me with teary eyes. Do you think you can trick me with those tears? You already told me about them.

She must have been fairly upset about our difference in height as the whining Jaim bared her canines and growled at me as she spoke.

"Dad, if you don't give that back to me right this instant, then I don't know what I might do, you know?"

"You'll do something? Go ahead. If you're able to take this back from me, then I won't have any lingering attachment!"

".....Really?"

"I vow on my name!"

I declared confidently and stuck out my chest.

I can always vow my name on something that won't happen.

After hearing my vow, Jaim nodded her head as if she had made her resolve.

"Okay. It's all because Dad is the bad one!"

Then, in that moment, my eyes that were trained through gaming was able to perfectly capture all of Jaim's movements.

A sharp glare and a sharp kick that contained her murderous intent as is. A good choice. If she couldn't overcome our difference in height, then the wise choice would be to attack my body. If she kicks my leg,

then I might lurch. However, something like the kick of a child, my trained body wouldn't betray me because of one or two attacks like that.

“Guh

There was a time when I had thought like that.

The thing I recalled in that moment, was a doctor's familiar voice.

——Bare this in mind. From now on this doctor will…….

My children who can no longer be born!

I'm sorry!

If you wish to resent someone,

“K-Kid, y-you…….”

Resent the mass murderer who had messed up her family with her own hands…….

“Males are quite pitiful animals, aren't they, Dad?”

The final smile I saw on the kid's face was overwhelmingly terrifying.

Thud. I couldn't even make a sound. I couldn't put strength into any part of my body. That's Deneb, Altair, and Vega. The summer triangle drawn by you……. Constellations were drifting around in front of me. It felt as if I were floating around in zero gravity. How? How could someone do something like this while wearing human skin……? More than that, didn't she come here in order to make Saeyeon and I unite……?

“You're right, Dad. It is always delightful to hear the cries of the defeated.”

After taking the game console back from my hands while I was rubbing my face against the ground and letting out a horrible groan, Jaim displayed a gentle, angel-like smile and spoke.

“Ah, if it’s **that problem**, then you don’t have to worry. Since I was born, it probably means that it’ll work properly again.
.....Probably.”

Don’t add ambiguous words like ‘probably’.....



Lately, my life has been like this.

At school, I’m treated as ‘that guy who already has a doe-like wife and bunny-like daughter but still cheats on his wife with that eccentric upperclassman (omitted)’ by the other students and I’m treated as ‘although it’s good that he’s taking care of his poor relative, the guy who shows complicated family matters in stereo to the girl who came here in order to escape from her own complicated family matters (omitted)’ by the teachers. Moreover, whenever I go home, like this, Jaim, no, this kid tries to tomwist and destroy my peaceful days spent with Saeyeon.

But it’s okay. I have a dream, a hope, and an ambition after all.

More than anything else, I have a cooperator who’ll break this situation down.



“That’s why I said you need to make haste and unite.”

“Is uniting all you know how to say?!”

“Did I not tell you that that’s the fastest method? Just shut your eyes for a bit and let loose. You’re going to do it later on anyway.”

“I won’t! I absolutely won’t! At any rate, is there no other method? Hm?”

As a real man, I, Jin Jaro, have lived quite the unshameful life.

It should be obvious if you’ve watched my life until now, but I also have pride towards the way I have lived.

That’s why I absolutely will not kneel before someone easily. I have self-respect after all. As I was able to overcome all sorts of suffering and hardship until now, I’m a real man who possesses an unyielding soul and body that’s capable of setting the world on fire if the world itself tries to mess with me.

That me, was currently on his knees.

“Please, I beg of you, Upperclassman Ha Nabom! No, Teacher Ha Nabom! Think of it as saving a single person’s life, please!”

……Fine, I’ll be honest.

I was currently latched onto Upperclassman Ha Nabom’s leg and shouting.

“Please take Jaim away with you!”

“Please stop, Underclassman Jin Jaro. If you’re like that, then doesn’t it appear as if you’re begging after having been dumped by me? As I said before, I have no interest in someone who’s going to become bald.”

“My hair isn’t going to retreat! I’m going to advance one step at a time!No, rather, stop saying weird things and take Jaim away! I can’t live like this! All right, sue me!^[3] If you won’t take Jaim away, then sue me!”

Upperclassman Nabom looked down at me, who was clinging onto her leg, with sleepy eyes before gently asking me a question.

“Should I split you open?”

“.....No.”

If it’s this person, then it feels like she’ll actually do it, so I furtively let go of her leg. Upperclassman Nabom indifferently wiped her leg with a handkerchief. She then flicked her handkerchief and let it fall to the floor.Woow.

“What exactly is the problem? It’s only been a week.”

“It’s already been a week, you mean! Every single day feels like the end of the world to me, you know? Do you know how much stress I have? Huh?!”

“For you to collapse miserably like this because of just those few days, it seems Underclassman Jin Jaro’s mental strength is weaker than a slab of tofu. Is your will on the level of radioactive matter that deteriorates on its own if left by itself?”

“Oh, that’s a good comparison.”

“.....”

“Why are you sighing?”

I even complimented her, but she ruined the mood.

“In any case, has there been any changes in Miss Jaim’s behavior?”

“It’d be great if there were.”

Once I uttered that complaint, Upperclassman Nabom looked straight at me and spoke.

“Although Underclassman Jin Jaro, who comforts himself by calling himself a scientist, may already know this, ‘information contamination’ is a severe problem. I’d like it if you treated this issue seriously.”

“Now that I think about it, what exactly is that ‘information contamination’ thing?”

“Ara? Did I not explain it to you before?”

“No, I did hear an explanation, but…….”

In response to my weakening voice, Upperclassman Nabom let out a sigh and spoke.

“Haah, fine. For Underclassman Jin Jaro, who is as dumb as he appears, I’ll kindly explain it to you once more.”

The more I hear this person speak, I occasionally get the suspicion that I might actually look dumb. Though that’s impossible.

“If you travel from the future and to the past, then you’ll be exposed to all sorts of information. For example, meeting someone or going somewhere. Each time these trivial interactions happen, you’re exposed to new information that’s different from the pre-existing information which you originally had. In the end, a problem can occur due to that difference.”

Up to this point was something that I knew well about. The butterfly effect. The phenomena where a single alteration could change everything. Hm hm.”

“When an ‘information contamination’ occurs, there’s a chance that your pre-existing memories and personality can be sent into a state of disarray. New information from the past will save over your original data. The more frequent these points of contact become, the

more your data will be modified, and as a result of these modifications, a change occurs from the most fundamental of hardware. Once you've reached the latter part, a Gestalt Collapse or a software alteration will occur from a conceptual standpoint. To be concrete, in a professional domain.....”

Intermediate omission.

“.....A problem will occur like this. Do you understand?”

“Yes. I understand.”

“Good. It seems Underclassman Jin Jaro isn't completely.....”

“I understand that I don't get it.”

The various mathematical formulas that Upperclassman Nabom had written on the whiteboard in order to give a better explanation have now reached the point of being abstract art.

“.....Underclassman Jin Jaro, are you really a scientist?”

“I-I am! I'm the prodigy scientist of this age! Scientists are naturally only familiar with their own area of expertise!”

Upperclassman Nabom let out a small sigh and spoke.

“At least you're good at talking. Well, whatever. This time I'll really, seriously explain it in a way that's easy to understand.”

That gaze that looks as if she's looking at someone stupid is starting to get annoying.

“Underclassman Jin Jaro, on April 26th at 5 o'clock, 34 minutes, and 27 seconds in the evening, do you know what you were doing when you were 3 years old at that time?”

“Uh..... I was in preschool when I was 3, and since preschool would already be over by that time.....”

“Do you remember exactly?”

“How can someone remember something like that exactly?”

“All right. I’ll tell you the truth. At that time, Underclassman Jin Jaro was fighting against the 7 Apostles(The Round Table) that ruled the world in order to save your lover from your previous life.”

“When I was 3?!”

“While wearing a black coat, Underclassman Jin Jaro, you were groaning in pain with injuries all over your body. Even when your lover from your previous life pleaded ‘Don’t worry about me! There’s no need to fight any more than this!’, Underclassman Jin Jaro, while bleeding excessively, you put a cigarette in your mouth and bluffed saying, ‘How foolish. There’s no way I’d fall when I was able to defeat Catastrophe of Chaos(End of The End), right?’.”

“Let’s smoke once you’re over 19 years old! Actually, let’s just not smoke!”

“The 7 Apostles(The Round Table) boasted proudly saying, ‘Pfft, Catastrophe of Chaos(End of The End) was the weakest among us 7 Heavenly Kings…… You’re only able to take down someone of that extent’ and they were preparing their ultimate weapon, Requiem of Ruin(Fate of the Night).”

“Rather, how are you able to talk like that?!”

“That is the truth of Underclassman Jin Jaro when you were 3 years old on April 26th at 5 o’clock, 34 minutes, and 27 seconds in the evening.”

Upperclassman Nabom smiled and continued.

“Now then, how is it? The feeling of having become aware of your memories that were once sealed.”

“There’s no way something like that would happen!”

Was this person that? If I think about it, was she that? Well, she did show that kind of tendency when we met for the first time.

“I heard that this was trending during this time, so I tried copying it.”

“No, it isn’t particularly trending…….”

“At any rate, the average person would say that that’s impossible. However, if I took Underclassman Jin Jaro back to that exact time in order to confirm the truth and it turned out that that **actually happened**, then what thoughts do you think will go through your head at that time, Underclassman Jin Jaro?”

“……I don’t know?”

I’m not really sure, but if that were the truth……. Then…….

“Ku, ku, ku…… It’s blackening(The Final Mode)…….”

“Hello? Come back to your senses.”

“Ah, what was I…….”

It felt as if I had a long dream…….

While looking at me who was in that state, Upperclassman Nabom spoke as if she were satisfied.

“Well, it seems that that was an adequate example. As you recall your uncertain past, if there’s a difference between that and the past you know, then a difference will also be made to all of your life experiences until now and an alteration will occur. Although there are mathematical formulas that can explain it empirically, in any case, let’s just say that you’ve understood for now.”

“Ah, sure…….”

“And if that happens, since there’s a chance that an issue may occur even in reality with Miss Jaim as the cause, please pay attention. If it

becomes too complicated, then I'll have no other choice but to take special procedures. You understand now, right?"

"Well, I have a rough understanding of it now."

Though it's a rough understanding to a certain extent. Regardless, I obtained **important information**.

"All right. It seems you at least have that much comprehension skills."

"I do have two questions though."

"What is it, Underclassman Jin Jaro?"

"First, is Upperclassman Nabom fine?"

In reaction to my question, Upperclassman opened her half-closed eyes widely. What's wrong all of a sudden? Upperclassman Nabom smiled with her eyes and spoke.

"Ara, Underclassman Jin Jaro, surely you aren't worried about me, are you?"

"No, after hearing all that, I was wondering just in case."

"Did you perhaps fall for me? That's troubling. For someone who already has a wife to……."

"I didn't fall for you! I'm not worried! It's merely a scientific curiosity!"

I shouldn't have asked. Upperclassman Nabom made a mischievous smile and answered.

"I'm fine. As I'm a dispatched officer, I've received training in order to be prepared for it. So what is your second question?"

"So when are you going to take Jaim back?"

“The conclusion ends up like this once more, it seems…….”

Upperclassman Nabom looked at me with pitying eyes. I could tell since I was slowly starting to be able to see through those sleepy eyes.

“No matter how much I think about it, I don’t profit from this at all. At school, the untaught masses are annoying since they go around saying that I’m cheating or whatever, and even the teachers are being bothersome now. Moreover, when I go home, that kid…….”

“That’s why you shouldn’t cheat in the first place. You already have a wife and daughter.”

“You’re the one who started it!”

It’s all your fault, you know?! Do you want to see me actually get angry?! Don’t make me blacken(The Final Mode)!

“Haah. So what’s your point? Are you saying that you’ll only act if there’s a reward? You truly are a child.”

“In the first place, I’m someone who doesn’t move unless there’s something beneficial for me.”

Even if you mark everything I’ve done until now off

as a service, as I thought, if I keep moving like this, then my pride as Jin Jaro, the genius scientist, won’t permit it.

“……And I thought I could push you around impecuniously…….”

“What’d you say just now?!”

“I said that I too thought about that issue in regard to presenting something to Underclassman Jin Jaro in order to increase your drive. Yup.”

I didn’t shout that because I couldn’t hear what she had said, but whatever. Once I gave her a sour look with my arms folded, Upperclassman Nabom surprisingly nodded frankly as if she

understood my feelings.

“Then, what do you want?”

“Give me a time machine!”

“But there isn’t anything in particular that I can give you…… How troubling.”

“Give me a time machine!”

“Okay. Should I let you touch my breasts?”

“Yes! O…… no, wait. Give me a time machiiiiine!”

Although those big and beautiful things that cause universal gravitation are also good, that’s not what I want! There’s only a single thing that I want!”

“If you can’t give me a time machine, then give me something that’s from the future!”

“Why do you want something like that?”

“It’s obvious!”

As our advanced civilized society is developing every day, the one who takes a step forward and catches that development first will be able to control the world. Just a decade ago, no one knew that cell phones would have this many functions.

In other words, if I’m able to acquire something here…….

“I could become a million, no, a billion, no, a trillionaire!”

“…….”

“A historical figure who prevents the world from collapsing due to a time paradox, no, that’s not right. Since I’m on a mission that has the fate of all of humanity on the line, wouldn’t this sort of reward be

obvious? It shouldn't be difficult, either."

".....You surprisingly have a rather thorough personality, Underclassman Jin Jaro."

"I'll take that as a compliment. Now then, my arm is starting to hurt, hurry up and give me something."

While receiving Upperclassman Nabom's dumbfounded gaze, I kept my arm held out.

"But it's unfortunate. In order to prevent the chicken-and-egg paradox, I cannot give you even a single item."

(Author's note • chicken-and-egg paradox: "If the young Shakespeare plagiarized the script of 'Romeo and Juliet' that was given to him by a time traveler, then who does the script belong to?" this kind of paradox)

"....."

"The only thing I can give you is..... my, body."

"No. Even if you act all embarrassed like that, it doesn't affect me at all."

"For you to not even react to those words, as I thought, is the reason why you don't want to unite also because of this? Of course....."

"I told you it wasn't! I have no issues down there! Don't look at my lower body with such sad eyes, okay? Will you believe me if I show it to you?!"

"I do not wish to see something that requires a magnifying glass to see."

"I'll seriously report you for sexual harassment!"

While looking at the fuming me, Upperclassman Nabom let out

another small sigh.

“Fine. Let’s put that aside for now. Although I cannot give Underclassman Jin Jaro a bribe…… since we are cooperating, I’ll give you a present.”

“A present?”

“A present that will help Underclassman Jin Jaro in the future.”

O-Ooh? Now we’re speaking the same language.

“T-Then, right now…….”

“DLCs require an additional payment.”

“I won’t do it! I won’t! Throw it all out!”

“It’s just at the level of an additional quest. Well, it’s not difficult.”

Upperclassman Nabom spoke while smiling happily.

“I also have a lot of interest in this current age. There are also things I became curious about after doing my research on this era. I want to visit famous places, watch the movies that were out during this time period, and go to idol concerts for people who were popular in this day and age like Miss Mary.”

She’s full of ulterior motives just as I had expected.

“However, no matter how much I try to enjoy myself on my own in this age, there are things that feel lacking.”

“So?”

“If you give something, then you’ll receive something in return. If Underclassman Jin Jaro explains to me things like the culture and the products of this era, then I can offer you a present out of my own good will.”

“.....In other words, a tour guide. Something like that?”

“Additional DLC quest ‘Date with your affair partner’.”

“.....”

Resist, hold yourself back. I gain nothing if I get upset here.

“What do you say? Will you do it?”

“.....Fine. If it’s something trivial like that, then I’ll do it.”

Although I had a strong feeling that this was going to come back and bite me in the butt later on, everything was an investment for the future.

“Really? Thank you very much.”

As she said that, Upperclassman Nabom smiled brightly.Yeah, if she opens her eyes properly then she’s really a beauty. It’s to the point that even I was nearly charmed by her for an instant.

However, that was it.

That’s not what’s **important** after all.

———I do not wish to see something that requires a magnifying glass to see.

.....No, not that! It’s not that pathetic! Once more, if I concentrate a bit more.....

———And if that happens, since there’s a chance that an issue may occur even in reality with Miss Jaim as the cause.

That’s right, Upperclassman Nabom said it. That she had no plans to take Jaim away right now. However, she also added something at the end. If Jaim causes that issue, then Upperclassman Nabom will take her back.

That means that if she causes an information contamination or if I witness it and I report it to Upperclassman Nabom, then she'll remove the kid. If that happens, then all the hardships that I had gone through until now will go bye bye. I'll be able to return back to my peaceful days where nothing could bother me.

“Ku, ku, ku……. It's blackening(The Final Mode)…….”

“……I see you've taken a liking to that phrase.”

20XX-March-13th. Cloudy weather?

Please circle
today's weather.



When I went to Jjaro's house today, Jjaro was digging through his closet.

When I asked him what he was doing, he said that he was looking for a photo album of when he was a kid and showed me my album. Jjaro looked for a picture of when he was 3-years old and he seemed relieved for some reason when he found one.

I wonder what's wrong? While he was looking for the picture, a picture my mom took because Jjaro drew a map on his blanket came out. Jjaro got all upset asking why we had this kind of picture and was about to tear it. However, when Jaim took the picture and looked at it while I was trying to stop him, Jjaro fell to his knees. Once Jaim said, "Heeh, so dad had a childhood too, huh?" he suddenly opened the window and tried to jump out of it. It was hard trying to stop him.

Translator's Notes

1. [\[↑\]](#) **‘Makjang’** is a slang word that means something that is so bad that it couldn't get any worse.
2. [\[↑\]](#) Trot music. [\[Wikipedia\]](#) [\[YouTube\]](#)
3. [\[↑\]](#) **‘Sue me’** is a Korean slang. It can be literally read as **‘Split my stomach open’**.

4. Approach

By some means or another, another few days had passed.

Once I lazily let out a yawn during a class in which we were boringly reviewing materials that I already knew, our homeroom teacher, who was teaching the class, sent me a glance. Whatever. It seems our homeroom teacher was just going to leave it at that since he went back to teaching.

While resting my chin on my hand, I looked out the window and towards the outside world that was filled with spring air.

For starters, although it seems my warning must have worked since the kid had stopped coming to school, that fact was actually more terrifying. I had to constantly be wary of the possibility that she'd invade again.

Misfortune has always been something that arrives without forewarning. While also aiming for these sorts of quiet moments.

If she obediently stayed in the corner of the house, then there's nothing more that I could hope for. No, that's not right. If she went back to the future, then there's nothing more that I could hope for.

Now that I think about it, this girl was like that as well.

I turned my head slightly and gazed at Saeyeon.

“.....”

I knew it. There's no way she'd be listening to the class. It was an obvious fact, but all I could do was let out a sigh.

Although Saeyeon was lacking in the head department and didn't study, she was a model student who would never sleep during class, but instead, she would do her best at doing other things that were

unrelated to the class. From what I could tell, she was currently engrossed in doodling in her textbook as she had her tongue sticking out and on the tip of her lips.

Ah, our eyes met. When I kept looking at her without being able to turn my head away, Saeyeon looked back at me and grinned. Don't wave your hand. You'll get caught by the teacher. Once I told her to stop by doing a hand gesture, she went back to focusing on her doodle.

“.....hm.”

No, well. It didn't matter to me what she did since it was unrelated to me, but for now, supervising Saeyeon was my **job**. Although I don't plan to tell her to focus on the class of this educational institution the purpose of which was to re-educate the untaught masses, for now, I should at least see what she's drawing.....

Once I leaned my head forward a bit and looked at Saeyeon's textbook.....

“......”

She was drawing a pair of boy and girl aliens whose eyes were occupying half of their faces.

Furthermore, their eyes were sparkling. That's horrifying. What is that? Are they shooting brainwashing beams out of their eyes? Also, why are both of their eyes visible when they're facing each other? Are you Picasso? Is this Cubism?

Why are the mouths on the aliens' faces both in the shape of a '3'? They look cute because of that. Her artistic style is scary.

More than that.

“......”

Why is it so obviously your and my face?

Starting from their hairstyles, even though she had drawn a pair of boy and girl aliens, she had strangely done a good job at grasping our characteristics. Though the names written right next to our faces were the deciding factor. Why did you even write that?

Ah, our eyes met again. Once I gave her a look that contained several different meanings, Saeyeon smiled timidly as if she had been waiting for this. She looked more delighted than she did embarrassed.

‘How is it? I drew well, right?’

I frowned at Saeyeon who was mouthing her words.

‘.....Ehehe♡’

Ehehe♡, my ass. If you keep that up, then.....

“Saeyeon, what are you doing not listening to......”

“T-Teacher?!”

.....I knew this would happen.



“So, what happened after that?”

“It’s obvious. She got caught by our homeroom teacher and was scolded.”

Although it’s vague whether that was actually a scolding or not.

“Okay, so how did your first kiss taste like? Was it lemon-flavored like I had expected?”

“.....Are you going to keep acting like that even though you already know what happened?”

I glared at Nanda but he simply laughed.

Although it seems our homeroom teacher, who had seen Saeyeon's textbook, was struck by the alien's brainwashing beam just as I had expected, he ended it by just saying, 'I know that life as newlyweds must be exciting, but pay attention in class.'

Furthermore, due to those words, once break time had arrived, the untaught masses gathered around Saeyeon and started applauding after they saw her textbook, so that became a problem. How much do you guys like applauding? Why do you guys care whether I pressed my lips against Saeyeon's or not?

“Still, I was relieved when I realized that Jjaro wasn't entirely uninterested in Saeyeon. Moreover, I didn't think that you would actually 'chu!' her. As I thought, you can't completely read what's going through a person's head.”

“Will you not shut up?”

“I'm right, aren't I? Furthermore, that little lady should also be feeling a bit more relieved thanks to this. Ah, did you give her my autograph properly? I put more care into it since it was for my No. 1 Fan.”

“Who cares, you lolicon. Do you like the kid that much?”

“Don't say something that'll cause misunderstandings. If there's someone who likes me, then isn't that obviously something I should be happy about? Especially if it's for an adorable little lady who claims to be my No. 1 Fan even though I haven't debuted yet.”

Nanda was speaking with serious eyes.

“Moreover, if my eye for beauty is correct, then that little lady will definitely grow up to become a beautiful woman. Since her mom is

like that, she'll definitely maintain her cute side while her body grows glamorously.....”

“That’s bullshit like Newton making apple jam.”

“Really! No, I’m not saying your name, Jjaro. Also, what’s so bad about being nice to a cute kid? If anything, I don’t understand you, Jjaro. You have such an adorable daughter and such a pretty wife.”

“Adorable daughter and pretty wife, my ass. This is on the level of playing house anyway.”

It is actually just playing house, too. In response to my grumbling, Nanda grinned and spoke teasingly.

“So that kiss was just a joke, huh? Then, next time, will you unite with Saeyeon just like your daughter wants?”

“I’m already tired of making rebuttals.”

I could only sigh. While I was letting out a big sigh, I heard a loud sound coming from behind me.

“Jjaro!”

“Hm? What is it?”

Speak of the devil. Saeyeon’s voice and quick footsteps. Did something urgent happen? While I was thinking that, the instant I turned my head, “Guah!”

“Oh, nice tackle.”

Saeyeon’s shoulder attack had collided into my solar plexus perfectly.

How should I describe this? Should I say that it felt as if I were hit by a car? Wasn’t there a wrestling move like this? Well, that sort of feeling. After being sent flying and falling to the floor, Saeyeon’s smiling face appeared above mine.

“J-Ja Saeyeon……. Y-You……. What, are you doing……?”

“How was that, Jjaro? Did your heart pound a bit?”

“……Wha, what……?”

Towards me who sounded as if he were breathing his last breath, Saeyeon smiled brightly and spoke.

“Jaim told me yesterday. She told me that love starts from coincidentally colliding against one another! That’s why I tried it out……. How was it?”

Love didn’t start from that, it ended. It was probably tragic.

People started to gather around the scene of the traffic accident, which was committed because someone misunderstood the place and method. Among the crowd, someone walked forward.

“That’s not right, Underclassman Ja Saeyeon.”

Upperclassman Nabom let out a small sigh.

“A coincidental collision, which has been used a countless number of times throughout history, is indeed a good method to capture the heart of a man. However, that isn’t how you do the collision part. For starters, you have to be holding a piece of bread in your mouth.”

“I-Is that so?”

“Yes. It’s a type of promise. Ah, you shouldn’t knock Underclassman Jin Jaro down like you did just now with that splendid spear move, but instead, the girl should be the one to fall down in order to display their weak side. And then, if you furtively cover your skirt and say ‘……Did you see it?’ at the end, then it’d be more perfect.”

“Why are you teaching her that as if it were common sense……?”

Beside the point, why does she always appear like this abruptly?

Saeyeon tilted her head in response to Upperclassman Nabom's words.

"Mm..... Jjaro, '.....Did you see it?'"

"Your practical ability is impressive. It felt like you were reading your lines straight off of some cards, though, so that part was a bit unfortunate."

"Quit it with that cool-headed judgment. Why are you here?"

Once I asked her that after I was barely able to regain the strength in my body, Upperclassman Nabom smiled.

"My ghost whispered to me that if I came here right this instant, then I'd be able to see something interesting. So I came here and, as expected of my sixth sense, I was indeed able to see something interesting."

What's that supposed to mean? Before I could even say anything back, without hiding her expression that clearly showed that she was enjoying this situation, Upperclassman Nabom continued.

"In any case, how did it feel? Did your heart pound?"

It's pounding so much that my heart might stop if I'm collided into for the second time.

"U-Uhm! Big Sis Nabom!"

Because of the sudden shout from Saeyeon in that instant, Upperclassman Nabom tilted her head.

"What is it, Underclassman Ja Saeyeon?"

While her eyes twinkled brightly, Saeyeon brought her hands together in front of her chest.

"Big Sis Nabom is friendly with Jjaro, right? You're also popular, right? You're mature as well, right?"

“.....Uh, mm, I guess.”

It was my first time seeing Upperclassman Nabom become this flustered. Well, it's a given when someone says those things to you while in the presence of others. After hearing Upperclassman Nabom respond and nod her head, Saeyeon continued.

“What do I have to do in order to have a ‘physical relationship’ with Jjaro?”

I spat out.

“Uwah, Jjaro. What are you doing? That's dirty.”

“Cough, cough..... Saeyeon, you, what did you say just.....”

I ignored Nanda who was wiping my spit off of his face.

Upperclassman Nabom blinked her eyes at Saeyeon's words.

“.....Mm, Underclassman Ja Saeyeon. Why are you asking me this question?”

“That's..... Big Sis Nabom is mature and you said that you had a ‘physical relationship’ with Jjaro, so it felt like you two have been getting along well lately because of that. You're also frequently playing together.....”

While hesitantly sending me glances, Saeyeon asked.

“But Big Sis Nabom, what does a ‘physical relationship’ mean?”

“In simple terms, a ‘physical relationship’ means a partner to play with. Whether we play ‘games’ together or not, our relationship is one where we enjoy playing ‘physical’ amusements together. It isn't something weird at all.”

After saying all that, Upperclassman Nabom glanced at me with eyes that appeared as if they were expecting something. I won't make a rebuttal. I won't.

“As I thought, do you need to have large breasts in order to have a ‘physical relationship?’”

“What’s with all these weird questions?!”

Despite my rebuttal, Saeyeon’s eyes continued to sparkle.

“Our classmates told me. That, as expected of boys, they always like it when they’re big. Isn’t that why Jjaro is being friendly with Big Sis Nabom?”

Stop looking at me with those shining and beady eyes.

“Uhm, Underclassman Ja Saeyeon? What gave you that idea?”

“Since Jjaro and I have a daughter now, since Jjaro and I are husband and wife now, I thought that Jjaro would treat me even better, but he hasn’t been playing with me lately…….”

Saeyeon glanced at me nervously and continued.

“That’s why I thought that if Jjaro and I were to also have a ‘physical relationship’, then Jjaro would play with me…….”

“…….”

The gazes that were coming from the people around me hurt. Especially you, Nanda. Why are you guys so interested in other people’s personal matters? Between the crowd that was looking at me as if I were a food waste disposal container with its lid open, Upperclassman Nabom spoke in a considerate voice.

“Underclassman Ja Saeyeon, don’t worry.”

Saeyeon turned her head towards Upperclassman Nabom.

“Although I may play with Underclassman Jin Jaro all the time, regardless of whether we may have a ‘physical relationship’ that’s capable of enjoying ‘physical’ amusements together without any reservations whatsoever, Underclassman Jin Jaro’s wife will always

be Underclassman Ja Saeyeon, right?”

Saeyeon inadvertently leaned closer to Upperclassman Nabom as if she were being pulled in due to Upperclassman Nabom’s words, which were said with a thoughtful tone and with a tender expression on Upperclassman Nabom’s face. No, wait. As Saeyeon’s guardian, I feel like I should make a rebuttal about those words.

“The thing which Underclassman Ja Saeyeon should be concerned about isn’t something trivial like an obstacle or the matter of size. Your fight is of quantity.”

“Quantity……? What’s that?”

As if she had no idea what that meant, Saeyeon asked back while blinking her eyes. Upperclassman Nabom smiled at that question.

“It means that if Underclassman Ja Saeyeon shows how much you like Underclassman Jin Jaro through your actions, then Underclassman Jin Jaro will also end up acknowledging Underclassman Ja Saeyeon’s feelings.”

In response to Upperclassman Nabom’s words, Saeyeon nodded with a determined expression on her face, making it clear that she understood what was said this time.

Nanda tapped my shoulder and chuckled.

“It seems like it won’t end as a joke this time, Jjaro.”

……He’s right, I have a feeling that something terrible was going to happen.



[Nothing much happened between you and Saeyeon, right?]

“.....Yeah. Nothing happened.”

After just barely being able to swallow down my desire to cry out for help, I was able to respond. Why is it that this person always goes straight for the point? Even though she's Saeyeon's mom.

[.....Is that so?Haah.]

Additionally, why does she always sound disappointed like this? Before the conversation could go somewhere more dangerous, I changed the topic.

“How's Europe?”

[Oh, yeah! We love it☆! We're currently in the city of youth and romance, babam, we're in Paris☆!]

“.....You're an old lady now, please don't attach stars to the end of your sentences.”

[What do you mean by old lady?! My heart is that of a blooming young girl☆ Isn't that right, dear♡?]

I couldn't even let out a sigh. ‘Huhuhu’. In order to cut off the lovey-dovey talk that was happening between Saeyeon's mom and dad on the other side of the phone, which was so sweet that it annoyed even me, I spoke up. Jeez, it's always like this with these two.

“Since I'm taking good care of Saeyeon, you don't have to worry.”

[I'm not worried about that. If it's your **job**, then you always do it thoroughly, Jaro.]

Because of her answer that genuinely sounded as if she really wasn't worried, I inadvertently stopped talking.

[That's why, Jaro, think of it as work and pay special attention to

her, okay? Don't do it with just strength and fervor. Since women are sensitive to the mood, it'd be a good idea if you paid attention to things like that. There are scented candles and a good atmospheric CD in Saeyeon's room, and if you look in Saeyeon's father and my room, then.....]

"I don't need it! Moreover, that atmosphere thing, were you the one who taught Saeyeon that?!"

[Hm? Jaro, you sound like you know about it. Don't tell me.....!]

"Nothing happened!"

Seriously, this is Saeyeon's parent for you. Once I shouted that out while gnashing my teeth, I could hear the sound of laughter coming from the other side of the receiver.

[Ahaha, okay okay, I'll stop teasing you. We're almost done with half of our schedule here, so we'll return around the beginning of next month, just as we had planned. In any case, can you pass the phone to Saeyeon? I want to hear our daughter's voice since it's been a while.]

".....Uh, S-Saeyeon can't answer the phone at the moment. Please leave a message after the beep."

[Jaro..... That isn't even remotely similar, you know?]

Please don't sharply annotate my joke.

[Well, all right then. I'll call again later on.]

Despite that, since she was the mom who had raised Saeyeon like this, she was generous when it came to things like this. How am I going to avoid this next time? While I was trying to think of a plan, Saeyeon's mom spoke.

[Ah, Jaro. Now that I think about it, I have something to tell you.]

“What is it?”

[I met your mother.]

.....,

.....,

[It seems she’s doing well. Though she must still be busy with her work since I couldn’t see her for long.]

“.....Yeah. Must be good, since she’s busy.”

Why is this person sharp when it comes to weird things, but blunt when it comes to things like this? I then heard Saeyeon’s dad say something in the background and Saeyeon’s mom spoke right after.

[Ah, sorry! I’ll have to hang up now. I’ll call again later!]

An annoying ‘doodoodoo—’ sound started to come from the receiver. Once I put the phone down, Saeyeon tilted her head and asked me a question.

“Jjaro, was that mom?”

“Yeah. It seems your parents are doing well. They must be busy since your mom hung up abruptly.”

“Really? I wanted to talk to my mom, though. You should have handed me the phone.”

“She said she’s going to call again later so you can talk to her then.”

Of course, I absolutely won’t let you pick up the phone.

What should I do next time?I don’t think I’ll be able to keep hiding Jaim from them.

While I was contemplating that and letting out a sigh, I noticed that Saeyeon was still looking at me while tilting her head.

“What? It’s fine. Your mom said she’ll call again later, so you don’t have to worry. Your dad is with her as well, isn’t he?”

“No, it’s not that…….”

Just in case she was feeling anxious, I smiled as I said that to her, but Saeyeon continued to look straight at me with her large circular eyes before asking me another question.

“Jjaro, why is your expression so dark?”

I was at a loss for words for a moment due to the head-tilting Saeyeon’s words.

I’m pretty sure I was making the same expression as usual.

I’m certain I was showing the same forced smile which I would always show.

The smile which I would make when causing a disturbance like an idiot in order to make people not be concerned about me.

Because of Saeyeon’s words, even Jaim, who was reading manga on the sofa, ended up turning to look at me. A stillness fell upon us as they waited for my answer.

However.

“No, it’s because I was jealous of their trip to Europe.”

This girl wouldn’t understand even if I told her.

Explaining something to a person who wouldn’t understand no matter how hard one tries was a waste.

“In any case, let’s eat. It’s almost time anyway.”

“Ah, wait, Jjaro!”

Saeyeon then grabbed onto the edge of my clothes when I was

about to brush my way past her.

“What is it now?”

Once I turned my head, Saeyeon spoke with eyes that were filled with determination.

“I-I’ll cook today!”

.....

“You will?”

“Ah, what’s with that answer?! Even I know how to at least cook!”

“No, well that may be the case, but why.....”

Why does Saeyeon, who has never held a kitchen knife before, want to cook all of a sudden? Don’t tell me? Does she still have a grudge against me because of what happened earlier today.....?

“Like Big Sis Nabom and Jaim had told me, I’m going to show off how much I love Jjaro! With my cooking of love!”

“That’s it, Mom!”

I ignored the little kid who had popped up behind me all of a sudden with a smile on her face and admiration in her eyes.

For some reason, while looking at me, who was only flapping my lips since I actually had a lot of things I wanted to say about this but didn’t know what to say first, with a satisfied look on her face, Saeyeon laughed.

“Are you looking forward to it? Since I’ll make Jjaro..... drunk? Is that right, Jaim? I’ll make you love drunk!”

30 minutes later.

“.....”

“Okay, it’s all done, Jjaro, Jaim! Enjoy!”

“.....”

I turned my head away from Saeyeon, who was beaming radiantly, and looked at Jaim. Jaim’s eyes were now filled with darkness even though they were filled to the brim with hope and expectation just a second ago. That’s a relief. This girl at least had a conscience.

I returned my gaze back to the table.

Oh, Lord. For a scientist like myself to look for God.

“.....Saeyeon, what is this exactly?”

“Hm?”

Saeyeon looked as if she had no idea what I was talking about.

“What do you mean? It’s potato rice and sweet potato rice!”

“.....”

No, I was asking her why she added **chips** in the rice.

“Mom would always say that it’s not good to eat just white rice, so she would add other ingredients! I tried copying her. How is it? I was thinking about whether I should make potato rice or sweet potato rice earlier, but I ended up making them both.”

Yeah. There were definitely chips that came from bags with ‘potato’ and ‘sweet potato’ in their product names that were poking their heads out from between the grains of rice, flaunting their existence. The fact that they were placed here and there inside this pile of steam was really.....

“.....And, what’s this?”

“It’s spicy seafood stew. How do you not know that, Jjaro?”

Those things that were floating around in the thin broth, I’m pretty certain that that’s the seafood-shaped chips that people ate for fun.

“How about this?”

“Shrimp fried rice.”

Why did you fry the snacks that people say even crows like?

“A-And this?”

“Soy sauce braised potatoes.”

Are potato chips truly potatoes? This is on the level of a philosophical thesis.

“Ah, do you perhaps prefer Saddo Bap over just rice, Jjaro?

“.....”

“Then how about Indian Bap?”

That’s right. Indian Bap^[1] is good. I want to hit your back.

Saeyeon grinned and turned towards Jaim.

“Jaim, do you also want a different type of rice?”

“N-No…… i-it’s okay, Mom…….”

Oi, kid, the luster in your eyes is gone.

“Okay, Jjaro! Let’s hurry up and eat! The dad normally eats first!”

“.....”

All right, there might still be some hope. Who knows if it’s tasty or not? Additionally, this is a meal that was made by Saeyeon for the

first time. Saeyeon is also over there taking glimpses at me with those sparkling eyes of hers like that. I took in a deep breath and scooped up a spoonful before putting it into my mouth.

I chewed.

Cruunch, crunch, ggrgruuunch.

“.....O-Oooooooh!”

This taste.....! This savory flavor emanating from the crispy and well-cooked chips! This highlight that further added to the tasty flavor by preventing the fragrance from escaping! Yes, there’s no mistake!

“So, is it good?”

Towards Saeyeon who asked that question while smiling, I smiled back at her.

“———How could you call something like this cooking?!”

I’ll flip this table over!

Cooking isn’t particularly my hobby, but the experience I had piled up while living by myself for about 10 years now was trembling with rage! Cooking, cooking isn’t like this!

“Kid, help me out he.....huh?”

Where’d she go now? Did she run away? Did she go to the bathroom?

“I’m right here.”

While I was looking around for her, I heard Jaim’s answer come from the kitchen. I could also hear something boiling.

“What are you doing over there?”

“Hm? I’m cooking.”

You are? You, the girl who claims to be Saeyeon's daughter?

"Don't worry and wait a bit. It'll be over soon."

What's going to be over? My life?

Without being able to stop her, Jaim started placing her cooking onto the table one plate at a time. For now, they looked okay. After taking off the apron that was so big for her that it was dragging on the floor, Jaim spoke.

"Although it's not proper manners to do this even though Mom had already made us a meal....."

Jaim licked her lips.

"But still..... Uhm....."

Yeah. It's fine to say just that much. I disregarded Saeyeon, who appeared to be sulking with a pout on her face, and picked up my spoon for now.

".....So?"

I made the nervously asking Jaim sit back down with a hand gesture and turned to talk to Saeyeon.

"Saeyeon."

".....What?"

"This is what cooking is!"

Excellent, it's excellent, kid. It's 美味(Exquisite taste). Regardless, Saeyeon continued to pout and turned her head away before mumbling.

"It's not that different, though..... it's even the same menu."

"Saeyeon, did your eyes go bad?! Should we go get you glasses?!"

“Mom told me, mon. She said that cooking is when you mix something tasty with another thing that’s tasty in order to get something tastier.”

I’m telling you this now, but that cooking theory is wrong.

“Really, I don’t think I can do that even if I wanted to on purpose.”

“B-But…….”

“That’s enough. Let’s just eat.”

I could only sigh.

Am I really going to end up marrying this girl and having a kid? Even if we really did, how would our dining table end up? And our children’s children, and……. Ah, the future of humanity is dark!

“It’s okay, Mom. I’ll teach you how to cook next time!”

“……All right. Thank you, Jaim. But…….”

Saeyeon opened her mouth and hesitantly spoke in a weak voice.

“Uhm, Jjar…….”

“What?”

Once I looked at her blankly with a spoon held in my hand, Saeyeon asked me a question while tears were starting to fill her eyes.

“If bad food is made, the food will be tossed aside, right? You’re going to toss it aside and scold me like that, right? Are you…… going to toss it?”

Toss? The meal?

Once I followed Jaim’s gaze which had been taking glances at me, I could see the drama that was being aired on the TV we had turned on in order to watch while eating.

Today as well, it was that drama, where the food was tossed aside and physical affection was being shared.

“.....”

I licked my lips due to the awkwardness and turned my head away.

Saeyeon was tearfully looking at me as if she were afraid of being scolded.

And Jaim was looking at me with interest as she grinned.

“.....Uh, I mean.....”

Today's lesson: Let's not watch TV while eating.

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“How.....could this have.....”

The moment I entered my room, I felt as if I were going to break down into tears because of the huge sense of despair that had hit me.

“How..... how could, something like this.....”

This is a nightmare. It has to be a nightmare. It can't not be a nightmare.

I couldn't form words properly. My steps were faltering and my hands were convulsing involuntarily. My vision kept flickering. Though there was also the fact that the tears in my eyes were making my vision blurry, because of the large shock, I felt as if I also had

vertigo.

“How could someone…… while wearing human skin…….”

While feeling as if Beethoven’s Symphony No. 5, Fate, were being played in the background, I lifted up the catastrophe that had occurred in my room.

An opened box. Crafted and remaining fragments.

And besides that, a neatly assembled…….

**“KID, COME HERE RIGHT THIS
INSTAAAAAAAAAAAAANT!”**

“Hm? What’s wrong, Dad?”

I shouted at the kid who had cracked open the door and was poking her head in.

“What do you mean ‘what’s wrong’?! What color is your blood?!”

“It’s red?”

“That’s not what I’m asking! How dare you act so innocently!”

“I answered because you asked…….”

“Why are you making that annoyed face?! What is this?!”

Jaim, who was tilting her head as if she had no idea what I was talking about, soon figured out what I was referring to and nodded her head.

“Yeah! I assembled it. Isn’t it cool?”

It seems she must have been proud of the item that was placed on top of the desk as Jaim smiled brightly and lifted it up.

The time was the year of 1942. During this time when the 2nd World War was still in full swing, a tank that would leave a mark in Germany's weapons history was born.

With a main gun that was capable of destroying any other tanks that were on the battlefield at the time, it had heavy armor that couldn't be breached even after being hit by a countless number of grenades. The armed vehicle achieved an unbelievable number of distinguished military services, and all of the war heroes who had left their names behind in history had utilized those tanks as their favorite armed vehicle. The sight of that tank trampling over the enemy tanks portrayed its name perfectly. This beautiful name that was described as being so perfect that it would be difficult to name it in any other way that would fit the performance of the tank itself.

Tiger I. The Tiger of the Battlefield.

———'s 1/35 scale plastic model.

“Why?! For what cause?! I was going to assemble it, you know?!”

“Hm? Because there was a plastic model there?”

“Don't make up weird excuses! Have you lived your life never being taught that you shouldn't place your hands on other people's stuff? Did you receive your domestic education from fantasy stuff?!”

“I received it from you, Dad.”

“It was me?!”

“Also, you weren't going to assemble it anyway, right?”

“I bought it beforehand so I could assemble it when I had time later on!”

“Even though you have so many……. Are you that upset that your daughter assembled a single one?”

“Do you know how much that one costs, kid?! My energizer for life that I was barely able to buy after splitting up my living expenses and research expenses……!”

Moreover, for it to be my…… my Tiger-chan! This brat!

“But I was bored.”

It seems she was unaware of my boiling anger as Jaim carefully placed the model back on top of the desk and spoke.

“You told me not to come to school anymore, so there’s nothing to do by myself at home……. You said so as well, didn’t you, Dad? To find something to play with on my own. That’s why I assembled this since I finally had something to do.”

“I was referring to games, I didn’t mean that you should do as you please and assemble something that’s mine! Play with that game console or whatever that you brought with you!”

In response to my shout, the kid’s face became sullen.

“It ran out of battery……. I forgot, the charger…….”

“……Oh, well, I see.”

That’s terrible. If your battery runs out when you’re in the middle of a boss fight, that’s just really…….

“……No no, that isn’t related to me! Then why did you do something like this? Going on the computer would have been better!”

“There are way too many weird things on the computer, so I didn’t want to touch it. Why are you watching things like that when you already have Mom?”

“Till the very end, this kid!”

Should I just hit her? Jaim opened her eyes wide and spoke.

“Are you going to hit your daughter? You’ll hit your daughter, Dad? Hit your daughter?”[\[2\]](#)

“Don’t say weird things! You have to be taught a lesson if you touch someone else’s stuff without permission! That’s the same as being a thief!”

“For you to want to hit your daughter just because she touched your toy……. If you have the time to get this upset, then you should just unite with Mom. It’s already been several days since I got here, but you’re still like this.”

Jaim spoke confidently while boldly sticking out her chest. This won’t do. I have to do something and teach this kid about the laws of society.

“Kid. When you did things like this, what did your father do?”

“What do you expect……. He didn’t do anything.”

So that’s why she’s like this. In that case, I have to do something. While watching me raise my body up with a determined look on my face, Jaim gazed at me with sparkling eyes and asked a question.

“Oh, Dad. Are you finally going to take action now?”

“That’s right. I’ve come to an understanding because of your words. As I thought, the future can only be changed through one’s efforts. I can’t be content with this reality.”

“That’s the spirit, Dad! Just let your instincts lead you and get it done! I’ll wait here patiently! Dad, good luck!”

It seems Jaim must have been truly happy since even tears were forming at the corner of her eyes.

“Dad is finally listening to me……. I’m, happy!”

“It’s a bit too soon for you to be happy. The time of enjoyment will begin from this point forth after all.”

A feeling of perplexity spread across Jaim’s face once my shadow loomed over her.

“.....Wait a moment, Dad? Why are you approaching me while making that sort of face?”

“It’s because I’m feeling ecstatic since I’m finally going to be able to relieve all of the stress which had piled up because I had to constantly see my daughter. It’s okay. Although it’ll hurt a little, it’ll be over soon.”

“B-Be over soon.....? Dad, don’t tell me.....?!”

“Currently you and I are the only ones here. In other words, there is no one here to help you.”

“K-Kyaah! P-Pervert, you’re a pervert, Dad! What are you trying to do to your daughter?!”

I leaned in and whispered into Jaim’s ears as she continued to panic.

“I’m going to hit my daughter.”

“.....What?”

I lifted Jaim up, placed her on my lap, and lowered her pants. Don’t think of something weird, I only lowered it to below her bottom. A taut and smooth posterior came into my line of sight. I see that her skin is good. I folded up my sleeves.

“W-Wait! What are you going to do, Dad?!”

“Although there are many people who say that punishment is a bad thing. I also agree with them since I’ve gotten in trouble with my teachers often. Nevertheless, as I expected, you have to be scolded if

you do something wrong, and stealing other people's stuff is a bad thing."

"D-Don't tell me!"

"And then that actually occurred."

Jaim, who had been opening her eyes widely, quickly shut them tightly.

"——Ow!"

Smack, smack.

Although I may have been filled with rage, I wasn't that cruel. I didn't hit her hard or painfully. I only hit her rear just enough that it'd leave a hand mark. Beside the point, her rear really is firm.

"H-How could you hit your daughter when she's this adorable, ow!"

"From this point forth, you are not my daughter!"

"Hi-hiiik?!"

"Be quiet! Do you think there's a child who was able to grow up properly without being hit?! Should you mess with another person's stuff without their permission or should you not?!"

"Ow ow! B-But, aung! This is too much, auh! Hua!"

"Don't make weird sounds! Are you sorry or are you not sorry?!"

"J-Just because I played with that a bit, aauung! I-I'm sorry!"

"Are you going to do it again or are you not going to do it again?!"

"I won't! I won't do it again!"

"Hm, good."

I hit her one last time before pulling her pants back up and lowering her down from my lap.

“Uu……. Uu, uuhuk, uuu……. My butt, hurts…….”

“That’s the point.”

“……Huk, uu, uuwaaa……. Mommy…….”

Jaim, whose butt must have still been aching since she was rubbing it, was unable to hold back any longer and started to cry. What a kid. While tears dripped down her face, Jaim glared at me.

“I-It’s unfair……! Even my dad has never hit me before……!”

If she’s going to be like this, then I can only give her one answer.

“I am your father.”

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“…….”

The next day. Since the weekend had arrived, I was going to take care of the backed up laundry, but I had no other choice but to stand there blankly while holding up the laundry basket.

“……What are you doing there?”

“…….”

Jaim didn’t listen to me and, while hugging her knees, turned her head away.

Inside the washing machine.

“.....”

Because it was a worn-out, conventional washing machine, her head was slightly sticking out from the top. Once I stared at her wordlessly, I could hear mumbling from inside of the washing machine.

“It’s unfair. Even though I was told to stay home by myself, Dad hit my butt just because I made that. Even though he never cared about what I did until now. What has Dad ever done for me?”

Mumble mumble. She was mumbling to herself in a way that was clearly meant for me to hear.

Regardless, it’s been a long time since something like this had happened. Going inside the washing machine. When Saeyeon got upset in the past she would also go inside of the washing machine and behave like this.

“Hey, stop it and come out. I have to do the laundry.”

“Hmph, mon. I’m not here, mon.”

“I can clearly see you in there, you know? Are you an ostrich?”

They say that ostriches believe things aren’t there if they shove their head in the dirt.

“Mom and Dad are mean. I was

able to travel back in time from the future, and yet I keep being told to just stay at home. Mom and Dad don’t even help me with my ‘Happy Family Planning’.”

“If you’re doing this because you’re bored, then go ask Saeyeon to play with you. Get out of there. I have to do the laundry.”

“Mom is too childish!I didn’t imagine that Mom would be like

this.”

This comment was a bit amusing. For an elementary schooler to call a high schooler ‘childish’. Well, Saeyeon is a child though. Jaim seemed to have snapped after hearing me laugh as she quickly turned her head towards me.

“Mom completely

treats me like a little kid! When I ask her to play with me, it’s either playing house or playing hide and seek…….”

“Well, playing with an elementary schooler would normally mean that kind of pastime.”

“I’m not an elementary schooler!”

“Don’t make me laugh. If it’s your current height, then I’d even believe that you’re a pre-schooler.”

Jaim must have gotten really upset by my words as she cried out.

“I-I’m going to grow taller soon! I’m entering middle school soon as well!”

“…….”

A middle schooler who goes inside of a washing machine, is it?

“Say something that makes sense. Rather, doesn’t that mean you really are an elementary schooler?”

“I’m small because I resemble Mom!”

Now that she mentions it, it was like that in the past as well. Even Saeyeon, who currently boasts the height and body of a model, was a short kid until middle school. If I think about it, it was around that time that Saeyeon still went inside of the washing machine…….

Even while I was reminiscing the good old past, Jaim’s complaints

continued.

“But Mom completely

treats me like a child……. No, it feels like Mom is the child.”

Jaim turned her head again and muttered while staring at the inner-wall of the washing machine.

“The moment I met her for the first time, she believed that a child was born after sleeping while holding hands, she doesn’t know what uniting means, and I became more doubtful when I heard her say those things while we were watching that drama. Seriously……. I knew that Dad was this sort of person, but I didn’t know Mom was like this…….”

“That’s why I told you before, didn’t I? I told you that Saeyeon was a kid. The thing you were thinking about didn’t happen.”

“But still……. I was looking forward to seeing what sort of person Mom was…….”

Because of Jaim’s grumbling comment, a sudden thought came to me.

“Wait. Didn’t you say that Saeyeon and I were getting along well before she left after a fight? And yet you didn’t know Saeyeon was like this?”

“……I didn’t.”

Jaim lowered her head completely before continuing. I really couldn’t see her now.

“……Mom left while I was still young…….”

“……When you were young?”

“I was really young so I don’t remember that well.”

Only a sullen voice was coming out from inside of the washing machine.

.....This girl.

“So why exactly did you think that it was my fault that Saeyeon left?”

“Because I remember the day when Mom left. I woke up in the middle of the night because I heard fighting downstairs. I left my room to check it out and saw Mom and Dad arguing. I don’t remember why you were fighting, but at that time, Dad, you said this to Mom, **‘Since the very beginning, I’ve never seen you as a woman.’** After that, Mom disappeared.”

“.....”

“That’s why I thought that it was all Dad’s fault.”

Jaim only stuck out her glaring eyes from the washing machine before continuing.

“I was made fun of a lot when I was a kid for not having a mom. Each time that happened, I would go crying to Dad but he didn’t care. ‘What’s so bad about saying the truth about not having a mother when you really don’t?’. That’s why I thought that Mom got sick of Dad who was like this and left.”

However, Jaim’s voice died down little by little.

“But..... I understand a little now. About why Dad said something like that.”

Jaim muttered while making a weird smile.

“But still, if I came back to the past, to a time when Mom was still around and we were living happily together, then I thought that I could make everything better if I could just make Dad see Mom as a woman. But Mom is childish, Dad keeps meeting up with that weird

girl, and he's even cooperating with her to get me to leave or whatever.....”

Hmph, she lowered her head once more and the washing machine spoke.

“As I thought, maybe I came here for nothing.....”

“Yeah. So hurry up and go back to the future.”

I felt like I heard something snap. Well, what does she want?

“In the first place, families aren't like how you think they are. Something like a family is unnecessary.”

“No, it isn't! Families are something precious! You only have a single family!”

“Heh, how foolish. That's all an illusion made by the media.”

I can't stay still after hearing something like that. Even if it's for the future of all of humanity, I have to teach her the truth.

“Listen carefully, kid. Families aren't like that.”

People often say that your family must be cherished.

Existences that can never be severed from you because you are bound by blood. Existences that help each other if something difficult happens and share their happiness, work, and exhaustion with each other. Existences that everyone obviously has and would make one feel grief if they didn't.

There is a countless number of moving tales that inform people of the importance and the preciousness of families. A child who donates their organ for their parent, parents who devote their entire lives in order to nurse their daughter, someone who travels a thousand miles in order to find their mother, well, tales like these.

These were all lies.

Lies that were passed down for generations in order to preserve society.

Parents who pass on all of their debt to their family and disappear, children who don't care about how their parents live, whether they starve to death or not, and play around, divorce, abandoned children, love and war, and things like that.

If you look around for them, then you'll discover that the world is brimming with these dirty and messy stories.

Families are precious? They're existences that can never be separated from you?

Why do you think family courts exist?

I don't believe in words like that.

Something like a family is unnecessary.

You'll be lonely if you live by yourself? Humans aren't that weak. No human who's incapable of living by themselves exists in this world. As long as they're confident enough, they can overcome it at all times. If they can't, then that just means that person is weak, and humanity needs to overcome that weakness.

As humanity has continued to develop, you can tell this fact is true by just looking at how the division of family has lessened.

That's right, something like family is an antiquated system that was only needed to fight against the beasts in Africa. In order for humanity to develop further, they have to endeavor in order to become the sole perfect existence.

In response to my sincere speech, Jaim, as if she had come to a realization, smiled brightly and spoke.

"Dad, are you an idiot?"

“Idiot, how could you call me an idiot?! I even explained it to you in simple terms!”

“.....I knew it, Dad is the bigger problem than Mom.”

Jaim let out a deep sigh and placed her hand against her forehead. That action really upset me. That’s why you should be upset too.

“Rather than that, you normally run around all energetically, but since you’re inside that washing machine, you’ve finally become a bit docile.”

Twitch, Jaim reacted. She reacted by glaring right at me.

“Although it’s a good thing for a child to be energetic, if a small thing like you keeps running around, then you’ll stay underdeveloped forever, you know?”

Twitch, twitch. If you keep that up then your vein will burst.

“That’s why you should just obediently stay at home and make plastic models.”

“.....What?”

In response to my final words, Jaim, who had been gnashing her teeth, opened her eyes widely.

“You said that you were bored, didn’t you? It seems you also like making plastic models, so if you’re that bored, then play with them moderately. I would have liked it if you just played games, but those will probably be boring for you since they’re ancient by your standards.”

Being alone is a boring thing. That’s an issue different from loneliness.

An empty space in time where you’re just waiting for someone. I’m completely familiar with the weariness that one feels while you’re

meaninglessly waiting for time to go by.

Well, furthermore, if I don't do this, then there's a chance that this kid will go crazy because of the stress and come to school again.

It's best to get rid of the source of anything nerve-wracking beforehand.

Instead, I decided to put my foot down on a single thing.

"If you make something that costs more than 30,000 won^[3], then I'll end you."

".....Okay!"

Don't smile, I'll get attached. In any case, even though this kid doesn't even do anything..... My Tiger-chan too.....

But, well..... Nevermind.

I shook my head and got rid of my pointless thoughts.

Emotions like that will call upon the same incident that happened on **that day**.

"Ah, I found you, Jaim!"

In that instant, I heard a voice coming from behind me, so I turned around.

"Huh? You're here as well, Jjaro? I was playing hide and seek with Jaim. Do you want to join us, Jjaro?"

"....."

The moment I sent Jaim a glance, Jaim seemed to have understood what my gaze meant as she then shouted.

"I-I'm doing this because Mom said she wanted to!"

“Did you not want to play hide and seek with your mom, Jaim?”

“N-No, I didn’t mean it like that…….”

Although Jaim quickly answered Saeyeon’s question, which was asked with wide eyes, it seems those words must have still concerned Saeyeon.

“Ah, then do you want to play something else?”

……What did I expect? It was Saeyeon. She’s naive.

It seems Saeyeon thought that the issue was what they were playing, so she clapped her hands as if she had a good idea.

“Right! Since Jjaro is here, let’s play something else, okay? It’s been a really long time since we played together, so I want to play house with Jjaro! It’s boring when only me and Jaim are playing. Okay?”

“…….”

Once I turned my head slightly, I could see Jaim sending me a pleading gaze. Yeah, playing house with just the two of them, that’d probably put a strain on her. I let out a sigh and answered.

“Fine. Let’s play after I put the laundry in the washing machine.”

“Really? Did something happen, Jjaro? You would always say no.”

“Well, it seems the kid is also bored. I’ll play with you two for a bit.”

“Wow! It’s been so long since I’ve played house with Jjaro!”

Don’t sincerely become delighted. Sheesh, what am I going to do with you?

Yeah, Upperclassman Nabom said it before. Think of it as **playing house**. Of course, I despise the idea of something like a family, but if it’s just pretending, then I can at least do this much.

“That’s why, Saeyeon, hurry up and bring out your laundry as well. I’ll put yours in together with mine.”

“Okay! I’ll bring them right now!”

She must really want to play house since Saeyeon quickly shouted that out before promptly leaving. Really, she’s only fast in times like this. It wasn’t long before Saeyeon came out of her room with a large bundle of laundry held in her arms.

“.....You need to bring these out regularly. You aren’t the one who does the laundry anyway.”

“Ehehe..... They ended up piling up because I kept lending my clothes to Jaim.”

The moment I tried to receive the laundry from the smiling Saeyeon, Saeyeon instead took the laundry basket from me.

“I’ll help, Jjaro! I just have to put these in the washing machine, right?”

“What do you mean help? Just wait obediently. Don’t ruin it like you did your cooking.”

Saeyeon became upset by my comment and pouted.

“I can at least do this much! I can help as well, mon!”

Confidence was overflowing from her sulking and pouting face.

“Mom said that all you have to do is put the laundry in the washing machine, pour some detergent in, and press the button! I’ve seen it done a lot!”

“.....”

She doesn’t sound believable at all..... Rather, you shouldn’t look down on laundry.

But, it can't be helped. It'll be troublesome if she starts sulking.

"Fine. Then give it a shot."

"All right! Leave it to me!"

Saeyeon beamed brightly once she heard my answer. I stepped to the side and Saeyeon inched forward while holding onto all of the laundry. Jaim watched her with interest. However, as if she were afraid of something, Saeyeon stood in front of the washing machine with shaking arms. It seems Jaim, who had been watching Saeyeon while only sticking her head out, had finally come to her senses.

"Ah, sorry Mom! I'll get out right now!"

Jaim placed both of her hands down on the washing machine, and 'hut', she put strength into her arms and jumped up. Only her upper body came out. Jaim seemed to contemplate for a bit before wiggling as she tried to take out her leg first. It was too narrow so she couldn't.

".....Dad, help me."

In the end, while looking at me with teary eyes, she raised both of her arms.

".....Seriously. Don't go in there next time. It's bothersome."

If she didn't know how to come out, then why did she even go in there in the first place?

".....On a side note, Saeyeon, what are you doing?"

"Sniff, sniff..... It smells like Jjarro....."

".....Don't smell the laundry."

My dress shirt only smells of sweat, you know?

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Once we appropriately set the washing machine and sat down in the living room, Saeyeon spoke with sparkling eyes.

“Since it wouldn’t be any different if Jjaro is the dad and I’m the mom, let’s switch it around! This time Jaim will be the mom and I’ll be the daughter!”

.....I knew that Saeyeon was like this, but she really is abrupt.

“Then let’s~ begin! Dad, welcome home!”

After clapping once, Saeyeon mimicked the short-tongue speaking habit of a little kid. I sighed and spoke. Yeah, I did say that I would play with her.

“.....Yeah, I’m home.”

It seems the setting was that I had just come back home from work, so Jaim promptly stood up and pretended to take off my coat.

“What would you like to do first? Take a bath? Have dinner? Or maybe.....”

While grinning slyly, Jaim glanced towards Saeyeon and spoke.

“Unite with your daughter?”

“.....Okay. That’s a wrap! That’s the end of playing house!”

“If it’s playing house, then is today’s concept supposed to be one where you call the daughter your wife and unite?”

“It’s not! Rather, what’s with that concept?!”

This kid was aiming for this! She was acting when she said that she

was bored earlier!

Different to me who had stood up and shouted, Saeyeon was contorting her face while poking her head as if she didn't understand.

“W-Wait, uuu……. T-Then, since we're playing house, does Jaim return to being the daughter and I become the wife again?”

“That's right, Mom! You got it! That's why you have to unite with Dad!”

“Stop it with that uniting thing!”

“But Dad, didn't you become interested?”

“I didn't! More than that, uniting with your daughter? What's with that crazy family?!”

“It felt like you were in your lassitude period, so I thought I should add in a new type of stimulus.”

“I don't need that kind of new stimulus!”

“Even though you told me, ‘From this point forth, you are not my daughter’ yesterday.”

“Jjaro, did you say something like that to Jaim again?”

In response to Jaim's comment, Saeyeon sent me a sharp glare. I didn't mean it like that. Before I was able to muster up an answer, Jaim spoke up first.

“Mom, it means that Dad doesn't see me as his daughter but as a woman…….”

“Will you stop teaching her weird things?!”

“……Our classmates told me before, but, Jjaro, do you actually like little kids?”

“I don’t! Also, who’s the bastard who said that!”

Saeyeon stuck out her lips.

“Everyone said so. They said that the reason why Jjaro isn’t becoming interested in me is probably because he might like little kids.But what is ‘becoming interested in’ supposed to mean? Is it fun?”

“Yup, Mom. Someone even said that it’s like a game.”

“This kid is trying to give out distorted information!”

As if I had said something favorable for her, Jaim turned to look at me and spoke.

“It isn’t distorted information! Dad looks at Mom as if she’s a child too much. Even though Mom is also at an age where she should know everything.”

No. Regardless of that, referring to that as a game is distorted information, isn’t it? Jaim looked at Saeyeon this time and continued.

“Mom, you shouldn’t listen to what only Dad says so much. Climbing up the stairs of adulthood has to be done with your own strength!”

As if she had said something inspirational, Jaim proudly stuck out her chest. Saeyeon, who had been tilting her head at my conversation with Jaim until now, seemed to have at least understood that and smiled.

“But everything Jjaro says is right, you know? Like the thing about pressing lips together, Jjaro doesn’t lie.”

“.....”

Jaim stared blankly at Saeyeon as if she had forgotten about what she was going to say. Saeyeon stroked Jaim’s hair.

“Also, Jjaro said to me before that since he’s saying all that for my sake, I should just follow him obediently.”

“.....Even though you heard what that weird girl said last time.”

“T-That’s..... Big Sis Nabom is an adult and has a physical relationship with Jjaro, so.....”

In response to Jaim’s blunt and somewhat unsatisfied comment, Saeyeon answered in a flustered manner. More than anything else, how does this kid know about that? Was it Nanda?

“In any case, Jjaro. If it’s a game, then isn’t it something fun? Do you want to ‘become interested in’ one another together?”

“No! I won’t! Also get off of me!”

Once I pushed away Saeyeon who had latched onto my arm during a moment of my carelessness, Saeyeon let out an unsatisfied grumble.

“Hmph. If you don’t want to, then it’s fine, mon. Instead, we’ll keep playing house. I won’t yield this. I’ll be the wife this time!

“.....Go ahead.”

I let out a sigh from the deepest part of my lungs and nodded my head. Yeah, let’s endure. I’ll be patient. People say that everything starts from patience.

Saeyeon beamed happily at my nod and spoke.

“Then I’ll try that out as well.”

“That?”

“Mm..... Welcome back, dear. You’re tired, right? What would you like to do first? Take a bath? Have dinner? Or me?”

So it was that? She’s really influenced by everything she hears.

“.....But Jjaro, what is this supposed to mean?”

Look. Just as I had expected, she doesn't know. While looking at the head tilting Saeyeon, I let out another sigh.

“Saeyeon, it means that.....”

Grumble.

“.....”

While gazing at me with glimmering eyes, Saeyeon asked once more.

“Take a bath? **Have dinner?** Or me?”

Saeyeon, who was modestly sitting up straight on her knees, swallowed down her drool. A grumbling noise came from her stomach once more.

Her large, hope-filled pupils sparkled as if they were shooting brainwashing beams out of them. Saeyeon asked once more with shining eyes.

“**Have dinner? Have dinner? Or have dinner?**”

“.....L-Let's eat.”

“Okay!”

Saeyeon smiled radiantly at my brainwashed answer.

20XX-March-17th. Really windy weather >_<

Please circle
today's weather.



Today, in order to make Jjaro's heart pound, I tried bumping into him again while properly holding a piece of bread in my mouth, just as Big Sis Nabom had taught me.

I waited in the corner and, in order to make his heart pound as much as possible, I bumped into him as hard as I could and he even fell down properly. I didn't forget to say "Did you see it?" either, just as Big Sis Nabom had instructed me. But I wonder what he's supposed to have seen? Jjaro was sent flying across the hallway just like that and even made a cute cry as he fell down. As his final words, Jjaro uttered "I even made you, food properly," before passing out, so I was scolded by the teacher.

When I bumped into Jjaro, I accidentally let go of the bread so I couldn't eat it all.

When I told Jjaro to pay me back with a piece of bread, I got hit. Next time, I'll have to make sure to bite down on the bread properly so I don't let it go. But I can't talk if I'm biting down on it. What should I do?

Translator's Notes

1. [\[↑\]](#) 'Bap' is 'Rice' in Korean. 'Saddo Bap' is basically the name of a brand that sells chips. 'Indian Bap' is a type of punishment game that's played by kids in Korea. If you lose, then you have to bend your back as if you're bowing and the other kids will gather around you and hit your back a bunch with the palm of their hands
2. [\[↑\]](#) '**Hit your daughter**' can also be read as the shortened version of the Korean slang term '**masturbate**'. The slang isn't related to one's actual daughter whatsoever, it's just a coincidence that they use the same letters.
3. [\[↑\]](#) 30,000 won = Approximately \$30.

5. Cooperation

“As I thought, are you a eunuch, Underclassman Jin Jaro?”

“Thank you for the fastball!No, wait, I’m not a eunuch!”

If I really were a eunuch, then I wouldn’t have to go through all this trouble.

After I finished giving my regular ‘report’, Upperclassman Nabom held her forehead as if she were having a headache.

“Underclassman Jin Jaro, do you not have the resolve to fix this situation? I’ve said it a countless number of times, have I not? If you wish to send Miss Jaim back, then the fastest method would be to unite.”

“About that, I’ve thought about it for a while now, but as I thought, wouldn’t uniting now cause a time paradox?”

“Setting a pretext like that by yourself and declaring it as a reason to not work is the excuse of losers. But the fact that you’re thinking along these lines must mean that you’ve started to gain the resolve to actually do it.”

“I didn’t.”

She keeps leading the topic towards a weird direction. I bared my teeth and displayed a fed up expression on my face.

“The reason why I’m trying to send Jaim back home is in order to prevent a time paradox from happening, as it’s the duty of a scientist. Weren’t you also dispatched to the past in order to prevent this, Upperclassman Nabom?”

That’s right. If a time paradox is something that occurs when the future and the past collide with one another, then it’s not as if one

would occur if Saeyeon and I were to unite early on. Of course, I don't plan to ever do that anyway.

Upperclassman Nabom let out a deep sigh and spoke.

"Underclassman Jin Jaro, I've told you several times already that I currently do not have a reason to take Miss Jaim back. However, if a problem were to occur with Miss Jaim as the source, then there would be a reason to take her back. Isn't that the most efficient method?"

Upperclassman Nabom spoke while tapping her ballpoint pen on the desk.

"As a government employee, I hold efficiency as my highest of priority."

".....Even though you're leaving everything to me."

"I absolutely despise tiresome things. Isn't that efficient? Outsourcing is a basic among basics. It's because you didn't know something like that that you were fired."

"Do I really get fired?!"

"In any case."

Tap, after audibly placing her ballpoint pen down on the desk, Upperclassman Nabom hid her mouth behind her interlocked hands. I've seen this pose a lot somewhere.

"The fact that Miss Jaim has started to feel dissatisfied with the current situation is a bad sign. What have you been doing until now, Underclassman Jin Jaro?"

"What do you mean what have I been doing.....?"

"I've told you once before, but 'information contamination' occurs when a gap appears in one's memories and what they see in real life.

Within Miss Jaim's memory, she recalls this point in time to be a time where you were, at the very least, 'happily living together'."

Upperclassman Nabom looked at me with serious eyes and continued. Although her eyes were tired, they contained power.

"However, that is not the case in reality. Moreover, if she's exposed to this situation continuously, then the chance that an 'information contamination' will occur will also increase. I had advised you to be wary of this in order to prevent this from occurring, but as I thought, Underclassman Jin Jaro's job performance skill is a solid 0 points."

"No, like I said, why are you making me......"

"The fact that Miss Jaim is saying that she's bored is because Underclassman Jin Jaro isn't working properly, right? Are you not embarrassed even though you're being paid? Should I appoint you to the storage? Do you not want to work?"

"No, I'm sorry..... Spare me from the storage..... I'll do my best from now on..... Wait. I don't recall ever receiving something like a wage?"

"But I let you touch my breast."

"I don't remember that ever happening! If that did happen, then this hand would have never forgotten that sensation!"

".....He isn't a eunuch if you consider this response......"

"I told you I wasn't!"

"Well, putting aside the fact that Underclassman Jin Jaro is a seedless watermelon."

"If you say something like that one more time then I'll really get upset, you know?!"

I let out a sigh, making it clear that I had enough.

“I told you that I’ve never been interested in a kid like that, so please stop stimulating Saeyeon towards a weird direction. Do you know how much trouble I had to go through because of what you said, Upperclassman Nabom?”

“I’m also repenting because of what happened last time.”

“Repenting?”

Hearing this person say a word that she would usually never say felt refreshing.

“Although I’m a trained agent, as long as I’m capable of causing problems, I have to limit my contact with the present. However, last time I had inadvertently gotten myself involved. I have to submit a written apology.”

“That’s surprising. I thought that you had definitely squeezed in because you were enjoying yourself.”

“Honestly, I don’t particularly

want to come in contact with Underclassman Ja Saeyeon and Miss Jin Jaim. It’d become difficult then.”

“Why’s that? As the affair partner, is dealing with the legal wife and daughter difficult for you?”

“Since that’s a subject matter that I’ll be writing, do not use it. It feels like I may accidentally confess everything while talking with someone who is unaware of the situation. Furthermore, in regard to Miss Jin Jaim’s issue, it somehow feels like I’m intruding on something so it’s hard to get involved.”

I see. It’d certainly be a good idea to keep the number of people who know that you’re from the future to a minimum. Especially if it’s someone like Saeyeon who might tell people on accident.

Furthermore, from what I can tell, Upperclassman Nabom and

Saeyeon's personalities didn't match. Although they were both fourth-dimensional, different to the childish Saeyeon, this person was the type of person who at least thought about this and that even if she behaved irrationally. That was difficult for the thoughtless Saeyeon.

"That's why it'd be good if Underclassman Jin Jaro could take care of things on your own without my involvement. I'm certain I told you last time as well, but there are two conditions for me to take Miss Jin Jaim back to the future."

That's right. Either a problem had to occur or the person in question had to say on her own that she wanted to go back.

"In other words, making Miss Jaim think, 'I guess I don't have to be here anymore. They'll unite and do everything else even if I'm not here' on her own is also a method that's available to you. So try to occasionally spend your time together with them like a cozy family."

"Spend my time together with them like a cozy fa, mily, huh."

"Don't put a comma in a weird place. Well, as I thought, the best method would be uniting, though."

"That won't happen."

".....I see. It wasn't Underclassman Jin Jaro's body that was a eunuch but his mentality. Were the rumors about you having a fetish for machines true?"

"I said I was going to get really upset, didn't I?"

Is she trying to pick a fight with me? She is, right? All right, okay. I'm not a man who ignores a challenge! If you want conflict, then I'll give you conflict!

".....No. It's fine."

But I just let out a sigh.

“What’s the matter? As I thought, are you saying that you don’t fight girls? I see that you have quite the premodern way of thinking. Are all the men in this day and age like that?”

While gazing at Upperclassman Nabom, who was throwing sharp jabs at me while chuckling, I let out another sigh. You know you aren’t intimidating at all, right?

“You helped me and I also don’t want to really fight with someone who’s cooperating with me.”

I won’t do something that is unhelpful to me. But if it was helpful, then I can at least disregard something like this. A man like me is tolerant.

“That’s surprisingly cool of you, Underclassman Jin Jaro.”

“What do you mean by surprisingly? I’ve always been a cold-hearted and cool city-dwelling scientist.”

“No, until now, I always thought that you were a complete piece of junk who only knew how to talk. This new side of yours is refreshing.”

“.....”

Hold yourself back. Ignore it. It doesn’t matter how people see me. Everything will be fine as long as I live my life while holding a strong sense of self-respect towards my inner self. If I do so, then, in the end, people will all come to terms with my amazingness. Heh, you can’t fall for me when that happens. My love is already full after all.

“For you to do nothing even after hearing this, your mind is truly that of a eunuch. Of course, you’re the type of man who flips tables with meals on them after hearing those other words after all. Or are you a pedophile who refers to small breasts as a status symbol? Ah, or do you perhaps like other men? I see..... you’re somewhat friendly with Underclassman Shin Nanda, so there is that possibility..... If you don’t like breasts or women and aren’t a eunuch, then.....”

“All right! Come at me! Come at me right now! Tremble, my right arm(Mechanical Engineering)!”

.....I feel like the information contamination is more severe on my end.

À À À

“Hoo..... That’s nice.....”

Submerging my body in hot water literally felt as if my body was thawing. I’ve been rather tired lately, after all. I’m not an old man.

The anecdote of how Archimedes discovered the principle of buoyancy is famous. They say that when Archimedes, who was given a royal command by the current king to find out if a golden crown was real or not, had seen the overflowing water from his bath, he shouted, ‘Eureka! Eureka!’ and ran outside naked. Was he not embarrassed? In any case, baths are, in other words, a treasury of knowledge.

Let’s organize my thoughts within this treasury of knowledge.

Excluding the bothersome surrounding influences today, I wanted to think about the stagnant repair on Multi.

Yes. It has become completely stagnant. The project was on hold.

It has been nearly 2 weeks since Jaim had appeared. During that time, I suffered at school, and whenever I was at home, I had to suffer trying to deal with both the kid and Saeyeon, so I couldn’t make any spare time. Even though my love is solely for science and Multi-chan.

It wasn't working out that well anyway, so I thought that one or two days would be fine, but I can't leave Multi in that state any longer. Thus, I should free up my mind in order to run out naked while shouting 'Eureka!'.

"Dad, are you in there?"

.....Breadth of mine, over.

Knock, knock. Along with the sound of knocking, I could hear Jaim's voice again.

"Dad? You're in there, right?"

"If you want to use the bathroom, then go use the one at Saeyeon's place. I won't be out for a while."

"No, it's not that. You're taking a bath right now, aren't you, Dad?"

"Yeah. I'm cleansing my soul, so don't bother me and go mess around with Saeyeon instead."

"Okay."

Click.

"Why are you opening the door even though you said 'okay'?!
Kyaa! Kyaa!"

I should have locked the door! Don't you know how to knock?! No, she did knock, but still! Once I quickly covered my body and looked at her.....

".....You, what are you planning?"

"I-I want to take a bath together."

.....What?

Milky white skin. Although she was short, her long and slim arms

and legs were exposed. Her protruding collarbone. While using a towel to cover her body starting from her chest and down to her knees, Jaim approached me one step at a time.

“I-It’s not that weird to take a bath with your dad, right?”

“It is weird! You should have graduated from that in pre-school! If you’ve matured, then you should know some shame!”

“It’s fine, isn’t it? I’m your daughter anyway. Or what? Are you a pedophile, Dad? From this point forth, you are not my daughter? Did you become interested in me?”

“Like hell I did! Rather, why do I have to take a bath with you? It’s my, my personal time of peace!”

“Eeh, don’t be like that, hm? Now then, scoot over a bit, I’m going in as well.”

“W-Where do you think you’re entering?! Where are you entering?! Get out right this instant!”

“Dad, if you move around like that, then I can see everything, you know?”

“Uu, uuk…….”

My hands, which were desperately trying to push Jaim away, naturally moved downwards. I need two hands in order to cover my jumbo wave cannon after all.

“……Heh.”

“T-This kid! Why did you laugh just now?! Aaang?!”

“It’s nothing. Mhm. It’s not a size that means you’re interested, right?”

“I already said that something like that would never happen! R-Rather, what do you mean by size?!”

“Now, now. I get it, so move over. It’s cold.”

“Uuk, t-this kid…….”

Without being able to stop her, Jaim let her towel fall to the ground and put her foot into the bath. I turned my head.

“You can look, you know?”

“I won’t! I don’t have a hobby of looking at something that’s underdeveloped!”

I’m a scientist! I’m only interested in cutting edge technology that has already been developed! After three or four years, yeah, if you grow up to be like Saeyeon or Upperclassman Nabom, then…… No, wait, that’s not the point!

Really, what is this kid thinking? Did she eat something bad?

Although I didn’t particularly plan to look at her, it was just that, since her thoughts would appear on her face, I turned my head slightly in order to observe that.

Since her body was small, just sitting in the tub was enough to nearly submerge her completely in the water. I couldn’t see the area below where the water was reaching her shoulders, but due to that, her collarbones were more prominent. Whether it was because of the hot water or not, her cheeks were slightly flushed. She gently brushed her slightly submerged hair behind her ear.

……Ah, our eyes met.

“A-As I thought, you’re looking?”

“L-Like hell I am.”

I turned away again.

“…….”

“.....”

Silence. Splash, a drop of water fell from the ceiling.

“I-I’m done washing so I’ll be leaving first!”

“What are you saying? You entered only a short while ago, Dad.”

“You normally aren’t supposed to stay in the bathtub for more than 5 minutes. That’s why.....”

“But I just got in.....”

“Yeah! That’s why you should wash slowly and come out later! Now then!”

Jaim grabbed me by the wrist as I was trying to quickly get out.

“W-Wait! Well, uhm, y-yeah! Dad, I’ll wash your back!”

“I don’t need it!”

“T-Then you can wash my back, Dad.....”

“I refuse!”

In response to my shout, I could faintly hear Jaim’s voice from behind me.

“.....Do you dislike me that much, Dad?”

“.....Hm?”

What is this kid saying all of a sudden? Once I turned my head slightly, Jaim spoke with cheeks that were flushed from either the heat or something else.

“I-I’m also embarrassed, you know?! But still, in order to take a bath with you, Dad, I was able to get in like this, but..... But, as I thought, Dad doesn’t.....”

While my mouth was twitching as if it were trying to say something instinctively, Jaim's grip became weaker. This was my chance.

"I-I'll be leaving first!"

That's right. Although I'm not sure what this girl is thinking, there's no reason for me to go along with her! If she has a loose screw in her head, then I'll tighten it later! That's why, for now, I should..... make my great escape!

"Jjaro? Jaim? Are you home?"

"....."

Ah, damn it.

I could hear footsteps and a voice from outside of the bathroom door. I couldn't see her right now, but I could clearly picture the girl in front of me. She's most likely going through the rooms while looking around.

"Are they not home yet.....? Maybe I should come later....."

And since she can't find us, she'll probably leave the house while tilting her head. Good. Once she leaves, I'll leave as well. I glanced towards Jaim and raised my index finger to my lips. It seems Jaim was at least able to comprehend the situation as she then nodded her head.

".....Mom! I'm taking a bath with Dad right now!"

"Oi, kid! I was telling you to not say that!"

What's with this kid?!

Because of Jaim's shout, I could hear Saeyeon's voice coming from beyond the door.

"H-hm? Jjaro and Jaim, are bathing..... together.....?"

Her voice clearly sounded confused. Her footsteps approached.

“N-No. Don’t come. I said don’t come!”

Please don’t come to meeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeee!!!

Click.

“.....”

Yeah. There’s no way Saeyeon would listen.

“.....Jja, ro?”

Saeyeon opened her eyes wide at the sight within the bathtub. Of course she would.

A_naked_man_and_a_female_elementary_schooler_in_a_bathu

A soaked Jaim and I, who was turning his head away while holding Jaim’s mouth shut, were seated in the tub.

“W-Wait a sec. This absolutely isn’t something weird. Uh, this kid barged in here all on her own. Something like forcefully bringing her here absolutely didn’t happen. In the first place, I have no interest in underdeveloped people. So don’t misunderstand and.....”

“.....That’s unfair, Jjaro.”

Saeyeon spoke while pouting.

“If you’re going to take a bath together, then you should have invited me as well. We could take a bath together as a family.”

“.....What, did you say?”

What did this kid(2) say just now.....?

“Upsie-daisy.”

“Why are you performing a strip show without warning?!”

Different to me who had come home immediately, Saeyeon must have just gotten back home from school since she was still in her school uniform. Regardless, with a puchi, puchi, Saeyeon took her blouse off with her own two hands, with a ziiip, her skirt zipper went down, I didn't know that skirts had zippers, and she lowered her kneesocks…….

“No! I didn't see it! I didn't! Rather, I've seen it all of the time! I've seen it often! I don't feel anything from something like that!”

“……Dad, what are you talking about?”

I couldn't even see Jaim who was looking at me with a weird expression on her face and questioning me in a weird voice. I can't see her. I can't see anything because of my hands. I seriously can't see anything so stop insisting I can.

“It's been a really long time since we've bathed together, right, Jjaro?”

“……Mom and Dad even bathed together?”

“Yup! We often did when we were little. Isn't that so?”

“…….”

“K-Kid, why are you looking at me with those eyes? It was a long time ago!”

Yeah! That was all back in pre-school and elementary school! If I were to bathe together with a mature girl like this, then it'd become dangerous for a variety of different reasons in today's society…….

Wait, that's right. There's no reason to panic. This is Saeyeon, isn't it?

Think about it. If you have a little sister who's still young, then who

would possibly get excited when that little sister of theirs says, ‘Big brother, let’s take a bath together!’? If there is, then that person is the weird one. You have to watch out for the door.

Yeah. Be it then or now, Saeyeon is still a child. There is no reason whatsoever for me to be panicking like this. Since she’s a child who knows no shame and is entering the bathtub in order to just bathe with a guy.

No matter how much Saeyeon’s body has grown, no matter how much she brushes her bangs behind her ear with her long and slim arm that’s overflowing with refinement, no matter how much her other arm tactfully covers her ample breasts that weren’t excessive or lacking but just perfect to look at, no matter how much she lacked in any fat below that and possessed a smooth body line with a soft stomach and perfectly carved belly button, slender and attractive thighs and calves that drew elegant curves and didn’t have a single fine hair on them, and no matter how much she had perfectly shaped feet that made one want to put crystal shoes on them, she was still Saeyeon.

“But Dad, are you really going to take a bath together?”

“I-It’s a bit difficult right now. Wait a moment.”

It isn’t weird. This is merely a physiological phenomenon. If you’re also a robust man like myself, then you’d end up like this as well. The lower body, since that spot, in particular, wasn’t an area that was dealt with by the sympathetic nerve, it would become like this all on its own at times.

“Okay. It’s calmed down.That’s why I’ll just be leaving.”

“Jjaro, where are you going? I said we should bathe together as a family.”

Saeyeon grabbed my arm when I was about to make my escape. Don’t be like this, my Big Shocking Mega Particle Cannon, my large and dull thing is much too massive, thick, and crude, appearing

almost like an iron mace, so one hand can't possibly cove.....no, am I supposed to cover my eyes or down there.....Uaaaah!

"I came in so that we could take a bath together as a family, but what's the point if Jjaro leaves? It's been a really long time since we bathed together, right? Let's take a bath together, okay?"

"I humbly refuse! You two should just have some mother-daughter bonding time and bathe together!"

"Jaim! Grab your dad!"

"Okay! I got it, Mom!"

"Don't grab me! Y-You, where are you touching?! Don't grab my other arm! Let me go! Hey, how am I supposed to cover myself if you two are grabbing both of my arms?!"

It's being made public. Big reveal! My BFG is being released☆to☆the☆public!

"Okay! I get it! I just have to go in the tub, right?!"

À À À

"....."

I found out for the first time that three people could fit inside a bathtub that was meant for 1.

I was practicing Zen while staring at the wall. Behind me, Saeyeon was leaning her back against mine and holding her knees. Jaim was being held by that Saeyeon.

With a splash, the bath water overflowed slightly as if it were trying to demonstrate the principle of buoyancy which Archimedes had discovered. As I thought, bathtubs are treasuries of knowledge. I wonder what I can find out while looking at this.

What am I talking about? I already found out that life is quite hard to live.

“Jjaro, are you crying?”

“The vapor is condensing in my eyes and flowing down, that’s all. Why?”

“Isn’t it a bit hot? What do you think, Jaim?”

“I think the temperature is just right. How about you, Dad?”

I do think it’s a bit hot. If you consider my headache right now.

“It’s been so long since we last bathed together like this. Right, Jjaro?”

Each time Saeyeon spoke, her back softly rubbed against my own. Now that I think about it, this girl’s skin is also quite nice. I wonder if her skin is a genetic trait.

“We stopped taking baths together after I became an adult, right?”

“.....”

I’m not going to say anything. I’m not.

While I stayed silent, I felt slightly more weight lean against my back. It seems Saeyeon was leaning on me a bit more.

“Even though we took baths together a lot when we were little, isn’t that right?”

“.....”

I said I'm not going to say anything. Seriously.

While leaning her body against my back, Saeyeon spoke in a longing voice.

“At that time, Jjaro, you would wash my body here and there.”

“Dad did?”

.....Should I say something?

While I stayed silent, Saeyeon answered.

“Yup. He even washed my hair for me. After putting shampoo in my hair, he'd mess around by making my hair into all these weird shapes.”

“Heeh, so Dad was like that..... Mm......”

The back of my head felt itchy. It was probably that kid's gaze.

She had long hair, so it was perfect to play with, you know? Her hair was also healthy, so I was able to shape her hair into any form that I could think of. That's why, although I don't know what sort of look you're giving me right now, stop looking at me like that. The back of my head is itchy, but if I try to scratch it, then I'll end up touching Saeyeon's hair.

Now our shoulders were touching. It seems Saeyeon had brushed her hair down.

“At that time, Jjaro said that long hair looked good on me, so I kept it long, but how about you, Jaim? Does it fit me?”

“Yes! It fits you! You're pretty, Mom!”

“Hehe, thanks.”

They're really getting along. How harmonious and cozy. Can I leave now?

“I wonder if I should let my hair grow out like Mom…….”

“Long hair would definitely look good on you too, Jaim. Although your current hairstyle is good too since it’s cute. Oh, right!”

Her shoulders moved up and down. She must have clapped this time.

“Jaim, do you want your mom’s hairpin?”

“Your hairpin? Are you talking about that flower hairpin?”

“Yup! You’ll definitely be pretty with it on. My friends also said that when I go around with this hairpin, I look pretty since it looks like I have an actual flower in my hair.”

Though I don’t think that’s what they meant.

“But…… is it okay? If I take it?”

“Ah…….”

For some reason, Saeyeon paused because of that comment. Even though they were just words that were said out of politeness.

Saeyeon gently touched her flower pin for a while. I didn’t know this because I had turned around. It’s because our arms touched.

“Mm~. Then next time, mom will buy you a hairpin. Let’s go together to buy one later.”

“Okay! Hehe.”

Yeah, yeah. You two get along, are cozy together, and smell like lily-scented soap. But are you girls not going to leave? I want to make my way out now. Of course, since it’s obvious that I’d be dragged back in if I said this out loud, I couldn’t say anything.

“Jjaro, how come you haven’t been saying anything since earlier?”

“.....What do you want me to talk about?”

“Mm~ I wonder? How life’s been for you lately?”

“I don’t have anything in particular to say.”

“You’re too cold, Jjaro. Even though we’re a family, I feel like you’ve become colder.”

My mind has been going through a lot of hardship lately, after all. Half of it is because of you.

“Then I’ll talk so, Jjaro, you just have to answer, okay?”

After saying that, Saeyeon leaned back slightly. Thanks to that action, she was now completely leaning against my back. Her back was rather hot.

“Jjaro, do you think I’ve gained weight lately?”

“I don’t know.”

“Don’t be like that. Look at me and tell me. You’ve been just staring at the wall since earlier, haven’t you?”

“Walls are good. They don’t say anything and I don’t have to worry about being arrested no matter where I look at them. For it to have such a regular and artistic pattern.....”

“Jeez, look at me when you’re talking!”

Crack, my neck was turned at an impossible angle. Isn’t this an assassination technique? While rubbing my numb neck, I had no other choice but to turn around and shout at her.

“Guuuuh..... W-What do you want me to look at?! You didn’t gain weight! Are you happy now?!”

“Really?”

However, Saeyeon showed a doubtful expression on her face as if she didn't believe my lip-service before lowering her head.

“But my chest has been feeling heavy lately as well……. Even my brassiere feels a bit tighter……, Are you sure I really haven't gained weight? Hm?”

“…….”

Although it wasn't because I actually wanted to look, I looked down out of courtesy.

So it was true when people say that fat had a lower specific gravity than water. They were floating.

“Of course, even Mom told me that my breasts would get bigger when I become an adult, you also seem to like them bigger, Jjaro, and even though they aren't as big as Big Sis Nabom's, my friends tell me they envy me, but……. For some reason, I feel like they're all teasing me for becoming fatter.”

Saeyeon grumbled as she looked down at her own chest. Those breasts that were milky white and didn't have a single blemish were being squeezed into all sorts of shapes by Saeyeon's arms. Whether it was because of the hot water or not, but they were being dyed into an attractive pink color.

“Did I really…… not gain weight? Are they not heavy?”

Saeyeon glimpsed at me and asked me a question in an embarrassed voice.

“Whether they're heavy or not……. Do you want to try holding them?”

“I won't hold them.”

I answered sternly.

“.....I knew it, you don’t want to hold them because I gained weight and you think they’re heavy, right?”

It seems she wasn’t satisfied by my answer, as Saeyeon then made a glum face. I turned away. Let’s look at the wall. For now, I added one thing.

“If you’re worried about your weight, then eat some vegetables and not just meat.”

“But vegetables don’t taste good.....”

“You’re a high schooler now. Just eat them.”

“Everyone has a food they don’t like!”

How imposing. Yeah, what can I say to a kid? On a side note, they say that if you only eat what you want to eat, then you won’t grow up properly, but what’s with this girl?

“But Dad, in the end, you’re admitting that Mom did gain weight, aren’t you?”

“S-So I really did become fat? Even Jjaro thinks I got fat, huh!”

“I don’t know! I have no idea whatsoever! How am I supposed to know if you gained weight or not?!”

I wanted to avoid this topic at all cost, but did you have to nitpick that?!

In response to my shout, Jaim let out a deep sigh and spoke.

“Dad, you still don’t understand even though Mom said this much?”

“What am I supposed to understand? I won’t give empty lip service.”

I’m a Disciple of Truth after all. There’s no answer in the first place. I’ve heard the rumors. If you respond to a girl’s question, then it’ll end

up like this.

Q. Did I gain weight?

A1. Yeah. You gained weight. → How could you say something like that?

A2. I don't know. → So you don't care about me?

A3. No. You didn't gain weight. → So you're saying that I was fat before?

In response to my answer, Jaim let out another sigh and spoke.

“.....Is Dad actually a eunuch?”

“Why is everyone so interested in my reproductive ability?!”

That person was like that as well and so is this kid. There's a limit to how rude you can be! What have they done for me?! I don't have any problems down there! It's alive and well!

“W-Wait a second, Dad! Calm down! You're splashing the water!”

“Yeah! I'm splashing the water! No, wait, more than that, why did you make a fuss and squeeze your way into the bathroom even though I was taking a bath?!”

“Like I said, I wanted to cozily scrub your back as a family.....”

“I don't need it! If you're not a kid anymore, then you should graduate from that!”

“.....How am I supposed to have graduated?”

For some reason, I could hear a disheartened voice behind me.

“I've never taken a bath with you before, Dad. I was also curious as to whether families normally bathed together or not.....”

“No, I don’t think they normally do.”

If a girl over the age of 7 takes a bath together with her father, then even if she’s his daughter, I think that’s still grounds to be taken to the police station. Laws have been like that lately.

“Well, I’ve never done it before either, so I don’t know that well.”

“Dad, you never took a bath together with your, ah……. Uhm, s-sorry.”

Jaim stopped herself mid-sentence and hastily shut her mouth. At least she’s quick at reading the mood.

“It’s fine. In any case.”

I lightly brushed up my wet hair and spoke. My glasses had also fogged up, so I cleaned it with the water.

“Families doing that is all because of the fantasies that were made by the foolish media. That doesn’t exist in the real world. Cozy families, my ass.”

“It’s because you’re like that, Dad, that…….”

“Be quiet, kid! If you’re going to call me dad, then listen to me a bit!”

“Mom, what part about Dad do you even like?”

Because of that question, I ended up inadvertently turning my head as well.

“Hm? Do you want to hear about your mom and dad’s love story?”

“Yeah! I want to hear it!”

No, there wasn’t anything like a love story.

Saeyeon, who obviously couldn’t read my mind, pulled Jaim closer

and started her story. She had a longing, and yet relaxed expression on her face.

“Your Dad may be like this right now, but…….”

“He was kind when he was a child?”

“Nope. He was ill-tempered when he was a kid as well.”

“……Eh?”

The once smiling Jaim’s mouth fell open.

“During pre-school, whenever I tripped and fell down, he would knuckle me on the head and ask me why I fell when there was nothing there, when the other kids teased me and I was crying, he would knuckle me on the head and tell me that I was crying like an idiot, and when I asked if we could play together, he would say that the other kids will make fun of him for playing with a girl, so he would ignore my request and go off somewhere by himself.”

“…….”

“He would steal my snacks during snack time in pre-school, hand me his diary and tell me to write it for him, and whenever he broke a toy and felt like he was going to get in trouble for it, he would blame it on me.”

“…….”

The kid’s gaze became incredibly sharp. Miss Rabbit Detective with scary eyes. Why are you looking at me like that?

“……So? Why do you like Dad even though he was like that?”

“It’s because of that.”

“……Huh?”

In response to Jaim’s dumbfounded voice, Saeyeon smiled brightly

and spoke.

“That’s why I like him.”

“.....”

Jaim looked at me this time. She was opening her eyes wide, making it evident that she had no idea what Saeyeon was saying. I don’t know either, so stop looking at me.

“The fact that Jjaro did all that, is because he likes me. That’s what Mom told me. Boys only tease the girls they like.”

There wasn’t even a single grain of doubt on Saeyeon’s face as she turned to smile at me.

“Furthermore, do you know how many times Jjaro has helped me? Whenever the other kids teased me, he would always follow after them and teach them a lesson, if Jjaro goes off and leaves me waiting in the playground, he’ll always come back to walk me home, and when my doll fell into the river, I heard a knock at the door at night and found my doll placed at my door after being roughly washed with water. That was you, wasn’t it, Jjaro?”

Without erasing her radiant smile, Saeyeon continued.

“Isn’t that why he’s still taking care of me and staying by my side? Isn’t that right, Jjaro? You like me, don’t you?”

Because that smile, was too bright,

I just turned my head and stood up.

“Well, this is enough, isn’t it? Let’s wash up and get out.”

Saeyeon opened her eyes wide and panicked because of my words.

“Hm? I didn’t even get to wash with soap yet.....”

“Then you should clean Jaim and come out afterward. I’ll be going

first.”

“Ah, you’re embarrassed right now, aren’t you, Jjaro? You don’t have to be, you know?”

I ignored Saeyeon’s voice that was coming from behind me and left the bathroom after taking a single towel. I couldn’t stay in that space any longer.

As I thought, that girl, she doesn’t know anything. She really, doesn’t.

The sound I could hear from beyond the door could no longer be heard once I returned to my own room.



Someone had once said that history was written during the night.

Therefore, as I am the genius scientist of this generation who is destined to pave a path in history, I too will obviously write history during the night.

“Move, Multi! Why won’t you move?!”

.....I see that writing history is difficult.

I want to shout ‘Eureka!’ and run through the streets naked, but the God of Baths didn’t grant me his blessing. What a cheapskate.

It’s because of those two kids. Give me back my inspiration.

“.....Haa.”

Well, it's not like they can give my inspiration back to me even if I ask them to. I could only sigh. I desperately need inspiration even if it's just 1%. Teacher Edison, please help me. Why isn't this working? Please teach me.

Knock knock, knock knock.

"Dad, are you sleeping?"

"I'm not sleeping. I'm busy. Go sleep."

"Okay."

Click.

"If you're going to say 'Okay', then at least show a response that befits that answer! If you're going to keep doing this anyway, then what's the point of asking?!"

"No, I felt like it was just etiquette....."

"I don't need your etiquette if you aren't going to uphold it anyway! Rather, aren't you supposed to be sleeping with Saeyeon today? Go sleep!"

Jaim pouted as if she were discontent.

"Mom is already asleep. I'm not even sleepy yet."

"You have to sleep early in order to escape that underdeveloped city, kid."

Jaim glared at me intensely.

".....Can you stop talking about that 'underdeveloped' thing?"

"If you don't want to hear it, then go to sleep. I'm busy right now."

However, Jaim ignored even this threat and instead sat down on my bed. What did I expect? She's terrible at listening to orders. I'll just

ignore her as well, then.

“Dad, what are you doing?”

“As a scientist, I’m creating a great invention that will change the future of mankind. Thus, do not bother me.”

Rather, why is this kid here all of a sudden?

Up until now, even on the days where we were supposed to sleep together, we would act like complete strangers and ignore each other, so this abrupt behavior of hers was suspicious. Ah, was it that?

“.....I’ll tell you this now, but I didn’t see anything earlier, so I’m not going to give you any money.”

“.....”

Her gaze became incredibly cold. Was that not it?

“.....In any case, what is this?”

“Fufufu. Do you want to know? Do you want to know, kid?”

“No, I don’t really want to.....”

“Good question! If you’re that curious, then I’ll tell you!”

Jaim looked as if she were seriously annoyed, but who cares? If this foolish, untaught girl wishes to know about the greatness of science, then so be it! Listen and be surprised!

“This is my ambitious project, Maid Robot Mk. III, ‘Multi!’”

“Maid, robot?”

Jaim opened her eyes wide. That’s right, you’re surprised. Of course you’d be surprised. You can be astonished as much as you want while before my technical skills!

After slowly looking over my work table, Jaim added.

“.....This?”

“What do you mean by ‘this’?! Is that what you have to say after witnessing this great invention?!”

“No, but.....”

After glancing over the work table once more with eyes that looked as if she didn’t know what to say, Jaim hesitantly continued.

“.....Isn’t this, just a robot vacuum? With some random head attached to it.”

.....

“.....That’s right. It is right now.”

Yes, it’s a robot vacuum with a flat cylindrical body that will, when turned on, sweep the floor on its own and change direction whenever it hits a wall.

“You’re calling this toy a ‘Maid Robot’?”

“Toy?! Take those words back right this instant, you brat! My Multi-chan isn’t like that!”

“Ububububu! Aa! Ii hurs!”

I’ll stretch these rice cake-like cheeks of yours as much as possible! Was this the mouth that said those words?! On a side note, her skin is really nice. I wonder if it’s because she just took a bath, but her skin is glossy. It feels good to touch, too.

After letting go of her cheeks, which snapped back into place like a rubber band, I spoke towards the teary-eyed Jaim.

“Although its beginning may look weak, its completed form will be extremely big and strong! With this machine called Multi, mankind

will be released from the foolish social groups known as families and advance one step forward! In other words, the end of mankind's infancy!"

"Uu……. B-But, no matter how you look at it, it's just a to……."

In response to my gaze that looked as if I were going to actually rip her cheeks off this time and explain to her why this was a serious problem, Jaim shut her mouth. Good. That's the way you should behave.

"More than that, if you really did come from the future, then you should have seen my great inventions. You, are you actually a spy who was sent here by some institute?"

"……I feel like your baseless confidence is impressive, Dad."

While glaring at Jaim who was looking at me as if I were pathetic, I spoke.

"It's not baseless confidence. Isn't it impossible for a pathetic word like failure to be attached to this genius scientist's future? In any case, I'm asking you if you've never seen my inventions or not."

In response to my question, Jaim rubbed her cheeks and answered.

"I've seen robot maids before. Not something pathetic…… not in their developmental state, but ones that were being utilized properly."

"As I had expected. There's no mistake in my development after all."

I'll overlook her slip of the tongue which she had quickly fixed.

"But I never thought that you were the one who made them, Dad."

"Then what do I normally do in the future?"

"I don't know. I never had a proper conversation with you."

Jaim uttered and slightly turned her head away.

“Dad, it was like you had no interest in me since you only cared about your work……. We rarely ever had a meal together. I was always by myself.”

My hand that was about to go back to the work table stopped inadvertently.

“Didn’t you say that after Saeyeon left, you lived with just me?”

“I did. But I was barely able to even see your face, Dad.”

“Why? Did I live inside my laboratory?”

Nod. After nodding her head, Jaim glared at me slightly.

“Since you were always at work, Dad, you coming back home from work even once a month was considered a lot. You didn’t even care about me.”

Since her gaze was a gaze that felt as if she were actually looking at her own detestable father, I couldn’t open my mouth.

“That’s why I was all by myself during the entrance ceremonies at my school and during the sports festivals.”

‘So why should I have cared about what you did for a living, Dad?’ I felt as if I could vaguely hear these words.

“That’s why I thought that everything would end up differently if Mom and Dad never broke up, if I also had a mom. If Dad sees Mom as a **woman**, then. If I’m able to make Dad see Mom as a woman, then…….”

Once she had said that much, Jaim took a breath before continuing.

“If you cared about your family properly, then as a family, cozily……. I thought that we could become like that. That’s why I

came here like this.”

“There’s no way that would happen. I told you, didn’t I? That we don’t need something like families, the world is a place where you have to live by yourself.”

“.....Dad, I’m asking this since we’re talking about it anyway, but why has your mind become so polluted that it’s making you think like that?”

“I’m not the one who’s polluted. It’s this society.”

“Is that the name of a criminal act?”

“No! Listen carefully. There is no future for a spineless humanity that’s bound by something like one’s families.”

Jaim gave me a pitying gaze because of my statement before speaking.

“Don’t you also have a family, Dad? Don’t tell me you were born after your parents went to sleep while holding hands.”

“Kid, you know that’s really funny coming from you, right?”

For a brat who really appeared after we went to sleep while only holding hands.

“.....Fine.”

In response to my answer, Jaim tilted her head.

I’ll return to her as much as she had given to me. If she tells me about her past, then it’s fine for me to do at least that much as well.

“If you want to know that much, then I’ll teach you why families are a **fantasy**.”

When I was little, **the two of them** were absorbed in their work.

As they both worked for a living, the two of them were constantly busy since they had started from the bottom.

I was obviously alone.

I had done my best in order to understand my busy parents. I looked after the house with my own strength. I believed that I would be helping them if I made my own meals, cleaned the house, and did the laundry.

These were all impossible for a pre-schooler. Nevertheless, I did my best.

There was a time where I had almost started a fire while cooking.

There was a time where I had put a suit that one of my parents was going to wear the next day in the water.

There was a time where I had knocked over a display cupboard while cleaning.

I worked hard in order to become a good child. I thought that they would turn to look back at me if I did. It's not like I was expecting much back from them either. 'Our Jaro is admirable.', 'Our Jaro is kind.' praises like these were enough for me.

And at first, they were like that.

Every time I was praised for doing well on my own, I believed that what I was doing wasn't wrong. As long as I continued to help my parents, we'll one day go on trips together like those other families, that's what I thought would happen. If I worked harder and lowered the amount of work my parents had to do.

However, as time passed, they started to consider the things I did as something obvious. It didn't take long before 'you're admirable' became 'that's obvious'. I was no longer praised.

That's why I tried causing problems instead this time. I believed that they would pay attention to me if I did.

As expected, that was the case at first. As expected, that also waned.

They ended up not knowing what to do.

Once I entered middle school, studying became important. If I studied well, then I was praised by the teachers. It seems they thought I was a problem child because of how I behaved during elementary school, so they would praise me even more if I did well. Moreover, the two people, they started paying attention to me once more.

Good grades. A good university. A good job.

I was happy about their restored interest in me. It felt as if they would be in a good mood whenever I got 1st place in terms of grades. Each time the teachers praised me, they must hear about it as well since the number of times the two of them would praise me also increased.

I was delighted. This was what I wanted after all.

Then, during that time, I finally discovered something that I wanted to do.

I liked science. I was skilled with my hands. If you think about it, ever since I was little, I liked to fiddle, break apart, assemble, and fix things. It felt like my calling. It was much more enjoyable than something boring like literature and English.

I even took part in competitions. I received awards as well. I was also called a genius.

How's that? I did well, right? Please praise me.

My teachers praised me.

However, the two people didn't.

The more results I showed, the worse my grades became. This was obvious. Something you like to do and something you don't like to do, if you had these two options available to you, then everyone would choose something they like to do.

To the two of them, actions like that were 'needless'.

The thing I liked to do was disregarded and the things I disliked to do were praised.

That's why I gave up. I believed that if it was something that wouldn't be acknowledged, if it was something that only I enjoyed by myself, then there was no meaning to it. I had already made my decision to do what they wanted me to do after all. Because I wanted to be acknowledged.

The two of them became busier because of their work. If they do better at their job, then it's obvious that they would become busier. Ever since I was little, I was well aware that their expectations would continue to go higher, so I also worked hard in order to not lose to their expectations. Things became more restless.

At one point, the two of them started to go on business trips overseas. But even then, whenever they came back home, they would pay attention to me for a bit. That's why I hung in there even more.

Eventually, on my birthday during my second year of middle school.

It had been a really long time since the two of them were going to be both coming home at the same time. I was looking forward to it. They both also said that they had something important to tell me. I made a homemade cake by myself and finished all of the preparations. It was a cake that was meant for my parents and not for my birthday since they were working so much more than me. I also had something important to tell them. I was looking forward to it.

A phone call came. They told me that they were both starting a new post overseas. They told me that they wouldn't be coming home anymore.

“Since Jaro is able to do well even by himself.”

In the end, they had no interest in something like me. I came to that realization.

The more and more I worked, the more obvious it became.

There was no reason to look back. Their own jobs were more important.

What they wanted from me wasn't a good kid who they didn't have to be ashamed of.

They merely wanted an existence who wouldn't hold them by the ankles and interfere with their work.

The saying that 'family is precious' was all a lie.

You didn't need something like that. You live by yourself in the world.

Because I, can accomplish anything even by myself.

Because I, was a **child that they couldn't handle.**

An existence that they couldn't acknowledge, an **existence that was needed in the world.**

“I see……. So in that instant, **you decided it was like that, Dad.**”

Although I heard the kid muttering something, I ignored it.

After all that, I felt more grateful than anything else. Thanks to that experience, I didn't become disillusioned by all of those foolish fantasies and was able to learn about the world at a young age.

“Thus, accordingly, I, the genius scientist who was born in this generation, am now endeavoring in order to teach the untaught masses about the truth and develop society one step forward towards the future!”

In response to my hand gesture towards Multi that I had purposely done in order to change the mood, Jaim made quite the profound and mysterious face. What’s your problem?

“With this, I’ll fix the people’s foolishness and help mankind take a step forward. Although it’s currently in its early state, once it gets through its technical development and is reborn as a proper robot maid, then even those foolish, untaught masses will come to terms with this truth! That you don’t need something like a family! That within an advanced civilization, families are merely an outdated system!”

“.....So that’s why you’re calling that a robot maid?”

“If we’re talking about robot maids, then they should have human-like heads! That’s why it obviously has a head! In that regard, I’ve already achieved half of my goal! Something like legs are just decorations!”

“.....It’s because you’re like that that you got fired.”

“So I really do get fired?!”

“Haa......”

Jaim let out a sigh and pressed her hand against her forehead once more. This kid, didn’t I say that that action was really annoying?

“E-Even if it looks like this, it’s incredibly advanced, you know?! The camera that’s attached to the head is able to read the terrain in front of it and its artificial intelligence will utilize that information in order to avoid obstacles on its own. Furthermore, it’s capable of using this claw hand in order to grab objects and move them! If you give it an order, then it’s possible for it to even go on simple errands!”

“Putting aside if it could even grab something and move it, at most, it’ll probably just roam around on the ground…….”

Jaim glanced at me and asked.

“Then at that time, when you said that you were going to conquer the world or whatever, is it because of that as well?”

Her memory is better than I expected.

“Yeah. It’s exactly because of that. If the untaught masses are unable to understand my great mind until the bitter end, then I will have no other choice but to resort to force. I’ll have no other choice but to achieve global conquest.”

“……How exactly do you plan to do that?”

I smirked at Jaim who was looking at me with pitying eyes and explained gallantly.

“For starters, if I have the technical skills to create robot maids, then creating weaponized combat cyborgs will be a breeze. Using them to declare war on the world is one method.”

However, since the American defense corp is scary.

“Once robot maids are released to the public, there will probably be at least one in every household. If that happens, then I’ll make it so that I can control them all, and with them, I’ll be able to rule the world just like that. A robot rebellion is scary after all.”

“Ah, is that so?”

This brat, what’s with this unenergetic answer? Well, what did I expect? This is why the untaught masses who don’t know science are…….

“I knew that you weren’t sane, Dad, but I didn’t think it was this bad…….”

“I’m a full-fledged mad scientist. A proper one at that.”

I declared to the kid who was shaking her head.

In truth, among the ‘mad scientists’ that often appeared in the media, none of them were actually proper mad scientists. At the very most, if they just make a bunch of machines in order to conquer the world, then they aren’t ‘mad scientists’, but instead they’re ‘mad engineers’.

“But I’m different. I’ll be carrying out a proper scientific experiment and verification. About why humanity no longer needs families!”

“Ah, is that so?”

Really, your answer is dampening the mood a lot……. Well, whatever. I didn’t expect that this foolish, untaught girl would be able to understand my great plan in the first place. We were roughly able to return the mood back to what it was as well.

“Now then, since you’ve heard everything, go to sleep. I’m busy.”

Shoo, shoo. In response to my hand gesture that was telling her to leave, Jaim stood up. All right, now you’re finally listening to me.

Jaim spoke.

“But this here, isn’t the coefficient of friction wrong on the changed motor?”

“……Hm?”

What did this kid, just say……?

Once I turned around, Jaim, who had been walking towards the door, spoke while looking over my shoulder and at the blueprint that was spread out on top of my work table.

“It is, isn’t it? If you look at it, because of the attached head and the devices put inside of it, the weight should have increased, but looking

at your calculations on your blueprint, I think you put less on your estimate of the coefficient of friction, Dad.”

“T-There’s no way! There’s no way that this genius scientist of this age could have gotten such a fundamental calculation wrong!”

That’s right! Miscalculations don’t exist for me!

“In the first place, if you consider the maximum output of the motor…….”

“That’s the maximum output. You need a decent amount of excess in order for it to roll properly. Wait. It’d be a problem if you only paid attention to that motor. Since you changed the balance of the weight, you’ll have to add another driving head, and since the amount of energy consumption has increased, you have to build additional batteries……. Also, you’d be better off bypassing here…….”

“Wait, wait a second! Don’t scribble on another person’s blueprint as you please!”

This brat! That isn’t a drawing paper! Give me back my pen!

Without being able to stop Jaim who, at one point, had picked up my pen and started drawing something on my blueprint, Jaim displayed a satisfied grin on her face as she put the cap back on my pen.

“……All right. This should be a bit better now.”

“What’s with that satisfied smile? If you’re going to scribble on something then borrow a drawing paper from Saeyeon! Where do you think you’re…….”

…….

……Huh?

Jaim spoke towards me who was staring holes into the blueprint.

“It’s good, right?”

“.....Kid.”

I had no other choice but to ask a question while looking at the confidently grinning Jaim.

“You, where did you learn this?”

“I didn’t particularly learn it from someone. I just get a rough grasp of things when I look at stuff. Like how it moves and where the problem is.”

While sticking out her chest, Jaim answered as if she were answering something obvious. Are you able to perceive the coefficient of friction with your eyes? What a scary kid.....

“Also, I’m the daughter of the ‘**self-proclaimed** genius scientist’, so of course I’d be able to do at least this much.”

“Don’t put an emphasis there!”

Jaim grinned broadly because of my reaction.

“Rather, how were you even able to make that lie detector, Dad, when you couldn’t even do something like this properly?”

“G-Geniuses don’t pay attention to something like trivial calculations!”

No, that’s not the problem. More than that.....

“All right. Kid. I’ll bestow upon you a glorious position.”

I grabbed Jaim’s wrist and spoke.

“From this point forth, you are my assistant. Feel free to be grateful.”

“That’s too bothersome. I’m sleepy. I’m going to bed.”

I quickly shouted at Jaim who was rubbing her eyes.

“D-Don’t be like that! How about this? I’ll even record your name as my assistant! You’ll be able to leave your name behind in history! How about that? Isn’t that a good deal? Right?”

“But I don’t need it.”

“Don’t be so difficult! Fine! A plastic model! I’ll give you an expensive one! 30, no, 50 thousand won^[1]! How’s that?! It’s a good deal, right? Tell me it’s good!”

“It’s getting late and you even said so yourself, Dad. You said that if I wanted to escape from being underdeveloped, then I have to sleep early. That’s why I’m going to go sleep.”

“Okay! I’m sorry! I was wrong! Please help me!”

After seeing me end up hitting my head on the ground as I tried to pull Jaim by her leg, she grinned widely at me.

“100 thousand won.”

.....So expensive.

À À À

“.....All right. I’m turning it on now. Are you ready, **Jaim?**”

“I’m all ready on my side. Turn it on, Dad.”

“Please move this time, Multi!”

Once I flipped the switch, the motor started to hum. Different to

before, it was making a good sound. Surely, surely this time……?

“O-Ooooooh!”

She’s moving! She’s moving properly! Multi is standing, I say!

……Although she’s moving around on wheels since her legs are just decorations. In any case.

Just as she was programmed, the sounds of suctioning and wheels rolling were emitting from Multi as she started to roam around the room. The camera must have been properly perceiving its surrounding situation since it was avoiding the obstacles that we had purposely placed here and there around the room all on its own.

“She’s working! She’s working! I knew I wasn’t wrong!”

“See? It ended well since you listened to me, right?”

Clap. Jaim and I, who were watching while taking refuge on top of the bed, hit our palms together. High five. If you succeed in something, then you have to do this.



Dawn was now showing its face outside of the window.

We had quite the difficult time at first.

In the beginning, I fixed the blueprint with Jaim.

“What? You’re going to do that there? How does that make sense?!”

“Why wouldn’t it?! Look, look! If this part becomes like this and drdrdrdrs, then wouldn’t this part go wengweng? If that happens, since that place will start to clickclackclickclack, you have to do this here!”

“I have no idea what you’re saying, you pseudo-scientist! Explain it using proper details and numerical values!”

“Dad, you’re the one who needs to fix your terrible handwriting! I have no idea what you wrote!”

This was why I thought that I couldn’t work with people who did things with their intuition.

After that, we had to search for the parts.

“Dad, you need to clean this place regularly! This is a completely different shelf!”

“It’s going to go all over the place anyway, so what’s the point of organizing everything? Wait, what are you doing?”

“Organizing! Really……. If I go back to the future, then I’m going to have to clean your room. You’re definitely still like this in the future. Rather, what is this supposed to be? Why is this in the tool cabinet?”

“Did Saeyeon leave that there when she was playing here? Rather, does your generation not know what dress-up dolls are? Well, it makes sense if you consider the kids these days. Look, if you do this with it…….”

.....Well, we discovered a nostalgic toy so we messed around with it for a bit.

We also took the parts we needed from other inventions that were no longer being used.

“Dad, are you not using this either?”

“Oh. Was that still around? That might still be useful.”

“But what is it?”

“It’s a heater I invented in the past while I was researching ways to peacefully use nuclear energy. I had planned to save on electricity by turning on the nuclear reactor and use the heat that emanated from it in order to spend my winters warmly……. Wait, why are you running away?”

Like that.

If I did this by myself, then it would have probably taken me several days in order to do this even if I had the blueprint, but thankfully, Jaim was quite the useful assistant, so we were able to finish it within one night.Well, she’s useful as an assistant.

“Uu, I’m tired…….”

There were bags underneath the eyes of Jaim who was stretching while receiving the morning rays coming from outside of the window. She looked like a panda. I ended up laughing.

“What? Your face isn’t a joke either, you know? You need a shave.”

I felt my chin and it was definitely rough. I grumpily scratched Jaim’s smooth cheek with my chin stubble.

“Hi-hiik! W-What are you doing?! You’re giving me goosebumps!”

“Hahaha! I did that so you would!”

I grinned at Jaim who was rubbing her cheek and complaining.

I felt like I heard footsteps outside of the door, but it must have just been my imagination.

It's still Saeyeon's dreaming time after all.

20XX-February-18th. Cloudy weather?

Please circle
today's weather.



Today as well, Jjaro spent all day playing with his toy, so I went to his room before going to bed. When I asked him if we could go out tomorrow and play together since our break was nearly over, Jjaro said that he was busy and didn't even turn to look at me. When I asked him if it was that fun playing around with that toy, Jjaro pulled on my cheeks and stated, 'Multi isn't a toy!'

Uu. While he pulled on my cheeks, Jjaro said, 'Well, what would you know?', with a drained voice and let me go. Jjaro is mean.

I got mad because of what Jjaro said, so I told him, 'Even I can understand if you tell me!', but Jjaro laughed for some reason and started speaking a bunch in some unknown language. No matter how bad I may be at English, Jjaro wasn't that good either. In the end, Jjaro asked, 'Now then, how would you respond to this?', so I answered using 'The only English phrase you need to know' that my mom taught me.

'Im bba-in ddenkyu an yuu?'

Jjaro ignored me all day after that. So mean.

Translator's Notes

1. [\[1\]](#) 30 thousand won = Roughly \$30.
2. This chapter had a rather heavy part in it, albeit surrounded by lighthearted stuff. Some people may not think it's a big deal, but Jaro's past is a topic that's a rather major issue here in S. Korea. One of the several leading causes of why S. Korea has the 2nd highest suicide rate in the world. Although Jaro's example is more of an extreme case, it's true that the majority of kids here are pressured to keep studying and show good grades in order to meet their parents' expectation. Not being able to meet that expectation and all the stress from their non-stop studying will cause them to do drastic things.

6. Reconciliation

“Jaim, take this.”

“Hm? What is it?”

Jaim tilted her head at the item that I had handed to her. I spoke while rubbing my eyes which were tired since I had stayed up for the past 2 days straight.

“Last time, you said that the battery in your game console died, right?”

Jaim held her spoon and became evidently mokey.

“Yeah……. A couple of days ago, when I was playing it in my dream, I was happy…….”

……Is she a game addict? This is a severe case. It seems Jaim must have remembered something while she was muttering those words since her eyes then shot open and she let out a shout.

“Wait, wait a minute!”

“What’s wrong, Jaim?”

Without answering Saeyeon, who had asked that while tilting her head, Jaim hastily left the dining table and went in Saeyeon’s room.

Mm, would 30 seconds be enough? 30……. 29…….

“Daaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaad?!”

“Guak?!”

T-This brat……. Even though I’m eating right now, for you to tackle me with all of your strength……. Is this heart-pounding sensation the

start of love.....? My leaving consciousness was brought back because Jaim had grabbed me by the collar and had started to shake me.

“Dad, what did you do with my game? You took it, didn’t you, Dad?! Right?!”

“F-For starters, let go and.....”

“What did you do with my game?! Ah, don’t tell me you actually dismantled.....!”

“It’s right here! It’s here, so let go of me!”

Once I took out the game console, Jaim quickly snatched it away from me, held it close to her chest, and glared at me. She even had tears in her eyes.

“H-How could you enter a girl’s room and take something however you please?! Low-life! Idiot! No matter how much Dad may be that type of person.....! Ah!”

After carefully examining her gaming device, Jaim ran up to me once more and started to hit my shoulder. That hurts, you brat!

“I knew it! You took it apart, didn’t you?! You disassembled it, right?! If it’s broken, then you have to take responsibility, Dad! Take responsibility!”

“Ah, seriously! Yeah, I took it apart! If I want to make a charger, then I have no other choice, right?!”

Twitch, Jaim’s arm, which had been assaulting my shoulder, came to a halt.

“.....What?”

“I have to know what the rated voltage or standard of the device is before I can do something like make a battery charger, right? If I don’t, then the circuits will just end up getting fried. You should be

able to charge it now. Though it'll take some time since it consumes so much energy by nature."

"How.....?"

"Don't underestimate me. I am the genius scientist of this age, a true mad scientist. If it's something at this level, then I can handle it with ease."

The reason why I stayed up all night wasn't because the device was difficult to figure out, but because I needed time.

"Even if you drop me in the 18th century, then, if need be, I'm someone who's so great that I would still be able to create a computer while in that time frame."

"Oh, right. Jjaro, there was a call yesterday. They said they're going to commercialize it."

"Is that so? That's good. With this, there'll be less of a strain on my research funds now."

".....Mom, what are you talking about?"

Jaim blinked her eyes, making it clear that she didn't know what was going on. That's why I explained it to her in Saeyeon's stead.

"I sold a patent a short while ago. The product this time is probably going to do great."

".....What? You did, Dad?"

"Jaim, why are your eyes like that? Oi, oi, brat."

"No, but, I always thought that Dad was just a complete piece of junk, who even got things like fundamental calculations wrong and was only good at talking."

"You, give that back. Hand it over. Also, give me back my goodwill."

This kid isn't afraid to say anything.

"Brat, where exactly do you think I've been getting the means to cover my living expenses, research funds, and also support my hobby?"

"By pimp.....ubububu!"

After pulling on Jaim's cheeks as she was about to say something nonsensical as if it were obvious, I stuck out my chest and declared.

"I am a genius who, at his current age, has sold 15 patents."

"Jaim, Jjaro even appeared in the newspaper before."

In response to my words which were said while sticking out my chest and Saeyeon who added that tidbit while giggling, Jaim contorted her face as if she were trying to mull over what she was told before speaking.

"Okay, so it's that kind of joke, right?"

"No! I make items that properly help in the world!"

2. Coloring Radar.

An item that I made before I could awaken and uncover the truth about the world. The radar displayed the color of female panties within a 30-meter radius. Due to a diffusion problem and the protection of privacy, the item wasn't commercialized. I broke out in cold sweat when I was called to the police station.

2. Acht-Acht (8.8mm) Antiaircraft gun.

My first commercialized product. It detects flies, mosquitoes, cockroaches, and other bugs before intercepting them with an 8.8mm laser. It makes your monthly electricity bill hit 1 million won

(Approximately \$1000), and because the gunfire re-enacting sound was too loud, it failed to disseminate. My hands were trembling like crazy when I had to pay the electricity bill that month.

3. Morning Waking Bed

A product for lazy people. If you set an alarm, then the bed will vibrate and wake the person up at the appointed time. The good thing about the bed was that it woke people up with certainty, but it strangely failed to be commercialized. In the end, I learned that lazy people didn't want to be woken up. I got scolded by Saeyeon when she fell out of her bed due to surprise because I had secretly made her into a test subject.

"In front of this era's genius scientist, who has a countless number of other inventions, the patents of which are being used, something like a trivial charger isn't an issue!"

That's why you should stop opening your mouth like that. Although it's okay if you look at me with admiration, that expression is really displeasing.

Well, it's not like they're selling all that well, but it's still enough to earn a living. That's the reason why I'm looking after Saeyeon, but that's simply because the world isn't able to understand my science.

"Yup! Jjaro is amazing!"

Saeyeon, why are you getting all happy as if you were the one who was complimented?

Well, if I say it like this, then this kid will definitely make a rebuttal. Something like 'Isn't that a technician and not a scientist?'. If she says that, then I'll pull on her cheeks. I pleasantly waited for her response.

"....."

.....Huh? She's not responding? If it's this kid's personality, then I thought that she would definitely say something. I lowered my raised chin and looked at Jaim.

".....Dad."

"What?"

"I didn't see you like that, but you're an amazing scientist, huh....."

Jaim was looking at me with eyes that were really sparkling with the color of yearning. She even had her hands held in front of her chest.

What's with her all of a sudden? It's embarrassing if you do that.

"Dad, I'm really grateful."

"H-Hm? Y-Yeah, be grateful."

"Yup! I'll be grateful!"

While smiling radiantly, Jaim nodded her head.

This brat, she looks cute since she's smiling like this. Stop smiling, I'll get attached.

"I've repaid my debt with this, all right?"

"Debt?"

"I told you before, didn't I? I don't do things that aren't helpful to me."

"Yeah."

"Therefore, if you've been helpful, then I'll repay you accordingly."

"It's an obvious fact, but Dad, you're really condescending, aren't you?"

“As I thought, give that back! Give that back right now!”

“No! Bleh!”

Jaim cutely stuck her tongue out at me before leaving the dining table once more. Saeyeon spoke up in reaction to her.

“Ah, Jaim! You shouldn’t play games while eating!”

“Wait a second, Mom! Dad made it for me, so I’m going to at least try turning it on.”

Despite Saeyeon’s comment, Jaim ran towards a power outlet, plugged the charger in, and connected it to her game console. Once the light that showed if the battery was being charged or not had turned on, her eyes widened.

“Oh! It’s really being charged! Dad! Thank……. Hm?”

And then, her delighted voice stopped.

After tilting her head, Jaim examined her game console before opening her eyes widely and looking at me.

“……Dad, it’s charging, but the power isn’t turning on?”

“Ah, that? While I was taking it apart, there must have been an error somewhere since it stopped turning on. Well, you can charge it now, right?”

Nothing is perfect in the world after all. If you gain something, then you’ll lose something in return. This is the law of equivalent exchange. It’s incredibly important when it comes to alchemy.

“As I thought, Dad is a complete piece of junk who only knows how to yap! Compensate me for my game! Pay for it!”

“Ow, ow! Even though I made you that with care!”



“And so?”

“We decided to go to Yongsan this weekend. She kept insisting that I have to compensate her, so I figured I’d just buy her a new one.”

“That’s good. As it so happens, I’m also free this weekend.”

In response to my report, Upperclassman Nabom spoke as if things had truly turned out well. Now that I think about it, she did say that getting along with Jaim was also one of my quests. Did I inadvertently end up completing it?

“As I thought, plain clothing would be more appropriate for the occasion, wouldn’t it? I even bought some recently because they looked nice. It would be better if I wore something pretty, right?”

“Wait. Don’t tell me you plan to keep an eye on us?”

Upperclassman Nabom blinked her eyes and asked back.

“Pardon? What could you possibly be talking about? We’ll be going together.”

“.....What was that?”

I feel like I misheard. Have my ears been going bad lately?

“I said that we’ll be going together. Underclassman Jin Jaro, why are you reacting like that all of a sudden?”

“Why are you talking as if it were something obvious?!”

“I came to a realization after the previous incident. I learned that, as expected of Underclassman Jin Jaro whose mentally a eunuch, there’s no point in beating around the bush with you. Since you don’t

understand even if I tell you, I honestly don't have the confidence to win."

"I'll question you about that offensive speech later, but what do you mean by 'I don't understand even if you tell me'?"

"It's that part about you. 'A-As it so happens, I'm also free.....' this obviously means, 'Let's go together.', does it not? Underclassman Jin Jaro, did you not learn what 'I bet ya don't have this back at yer place.' means?"

⟨Camellia Flower⟩^[1] is a good short story that they even teach you about at school. Obviously, I had learned about it. No, if that's the case, then.....

"I see. So that's what you've been trying to say. I was slow in realizing."

"It's fine if you've understood now. In any case....."

I understand now, so you don't have to say anything more.

After placing my index finger on Upperclassman Nabom's lips and stopping her from continuing, I brushed her wavy hair back and spoke in a voice that was filled with grief.

"But I apologize, Upperclassman Nabom. I am a cold, city-dwelling scientist who is of this generation. I cannot answer your passionate emotions. It'll only be troubling if you fall for me. Hoo, I'm living such a sinful life....."

"I recommend that you speedily go and receive some A/S. Your current state is quite severe."

I feel like I've been seeing this 'Did you get shot in the head?' expression a lot lately.

Upperclassman Nabom wiped her lips with a handkerchief before throwing it on the ground.

“Well, as Underclassman Jin Jaro had said, observation is also my goal.”

“No, I don’t care about that.”

“.....I see that you have quite an aptitude in affronting people.”

After seeing Upperclassman Nabom lower the ends of her mouth as if she were actually hurt, I continued.

“Upperclassman Nabom, you said it yourself, didn’t you? You told me to spend my time with them like a fa, mily. But if Upperclassman Nabom, who had said that, were to squeeze your way in, then what would they say?”

“Oh, you’ve been unexpectedly concerned about this, haven’t you? Even though you said that you didn’t care about Underclassman Ja Saeyeon.”

I wasn’t concerned about this at all..... would probably be a lie.

“But it’s all right. As I’ve said before, I have no interest in a eunuch who will go bald in the future.”

“Just saying either one of those is incredibly upsetting, but since you’ve fused them together, the insult has reached a super rare level.”

“This is an easy to miss golden opportunity where I can actually use the excuse that I’m working properly. I’ve also been curious about the scientific technology level of this era.”

“Like I said, I understand Upperclassman Nabom’s situation, but.....”

“But if you enjoy the promised cozy date with just you and your affair partner on a later occasion, then, although it’s unfortunate, I’ll give up on this opportunity.”

What’s with this scary..... Upperclassman Nabom smiled with her

eyes.

“If Underclassman Jin Jaro goes with me, then I can give an excuse like ‘I went out in order to learn more about the research subject’, and not only will I not have to go by myself, but I won’t be bored either since I can just ask you for explanations. Moreover, since Underclassman Jin Jaro will be paying for everything, it’ll be an opportunity that’s as good as this, so I’m okay with backing down.”

“The first two things are fine, but I’ll have to pay for everything?”

“Oh dear. Surely you aren’t saying that you won’t buy me anything, are you? Underclassman Jin Jaro, haven’t you become so enthralled by my charm that you already do everything that I ask you to do? Although I have to let you touch my breast once per can of soda.”

“That never happened, you know? Rather, aren’t you self-destructing right now, Upperclassman Nabom?!”

No matter how you look at it, doesn’t this sound as if she’d sell her body for a single can of soda?

“If you wish to defeat a powerful enemy, then there are times when sacrifice is inevitable. Now then, leave this to me and let us go together.”

“The premise concluded as us going together in the end?!”

“Now, make your choice. Go with everyone this time, or enjoy a date alone with me next time. Additionally, you’re not allowed to phone an audience member.”

After saying that, Upperclassman Nabom scooted her chair slightly closer to me. Ugh, this is a distance where the law of universal gravitation can take effect. Upperclassman Nabom furtively folded her arms and looked up at me with sparkling eyes.

Rather, this is the first time this person has ever pestered me like

this. Did she want to go that much?

I'm not sure what Saeyeon would say, but I feel like Jaim wouldn't like it that much..... for starters, since this is supposed to be a reward for what Jaim had done for me, I don't feel like I should comply..... but if she's going to beg and pester me this much.....

“.....So you're telling me that she's going with us?”

I quickly exclaimed at Jaim who was glaring daggers at me.

“I-I had no other choice! She kept saying that I'll have to go on a date with her later on if I didn't invite her now, and I'm afraid of what might happen if that date were to actually occur.”

In the middle of the night, after Saeyeon had gone to bed, and while my nominal assistant was helping me with Multi's improvements, once I told her about what had happened since I felt like I had to at least tell her, Jaim pressed her hand against her forehead as if she had a headache.

“.....No, no matter how much of a compulsive idiot you may be, Dad, I didn't think that you were this thoughtless......”

Jaim gave me a sharp look and glared at me.

“Where did that ‘mad scientist who doesn't get swayed by the foolish, untaught masses’, the one Dad always talks about, go off and die at? They say that rabbits can live without their liver, but were you able to live without your brain, Dad?”

Look at this girl talk.

“Then what do you want? For now, Upperclassman Nabom's role is to keep an eye on you. Instead of following behind us in secret, don't you also think it'd be better if she was somewhere that we could see?”

“If you can’t even say it……. Ah, I’m going to die of old age at this rate…….”

Because of her tone that sounded as if she really did have a headache, I quickly spoke up.

“F-Fine! I’ll ask Nanda to go with us as well, so let’s call it even with that. Okay? You’ll also be satisfied if he comes as well, right? He’s your favorite celebrity after all.”

Different to what I had hoped for, Jaim spoke while glaring sharply at me in response to my offer.

“Dad, do you think I’m an idiot?”

Don’t behave like that while holding a wrench in your hand. It’s seriously scary.

“And so? What excuse are you going to tell Mom?”

“I already have countermeasures for something like that. We’re going to the electronics market anyway. Wouldn’t Saeyeon understand if I tell her that, as it so happens, Upperclassman Nabom also had something to do there so we decided to go together? We’re also in the same club and since Saeyeon is well aware that I’m knowledgeable when it comes to science and technology, I can tell her that Upperclassman Nabom is coming along so I can explain things to her. If we’re talking about excuses, then I have plenty.”

“……Dad, do you really think Mom is going to believe that?”

“You said it as well, didn’t you? That Saeyeon is a child.”

And children are easily deceived by lip service.

Jaim gazed at me with sad eyes and spoke.

“……Really, you don’t think at all, Dad.”

“Hm? What are you talking about?”

“.....It’s nothing.”

Don’t say something that’s incredibly concerning and follow it up by telling me that it’s nothing. Now that I think about it, there was also something that I was concerned about.

“On a side note, Jaim, are you not going to sleep with Saeyeon today? Is it fine for you to keep helping me out like this almost every night?”

Jaim, who was muttering to herself while turning the wrench, paused in response to my words.

“Dad, are you worried about me?”

“Regardless of everything else, I’ve been ordering an elementary schooler around

at night, so of course I’d be concerned. At this rate, you’ll stay underdeveloped.”

“.....You always say one line too much, Dad.”

She frowned again and grumbled. Even though I showed concern for her.

“You recently

haven’t been playing with Saeyeon either, right? Saeyeon looked bored lately, so play with her sometimes. Even if you’re just an elementary schooler.”

“Mom will probably like it more if you were the one who played with her, Dad.”

“I don’t want to.”

Jaim let out a deep sigh because of my stern retort. She then bit at her nails as she muttered to herself.

“.....As I thought, I have to do something about this.”

“Why do you keep mumbling to yourself? If you have something to say, then say it properly.”

“You’re dumb, Dad.”

“Not that!”



Well, under that context, Sunday quickly arrived. We were standing in front of the subway station, the place we had agreed upon.

“.....So you really did come.”

Jaim, who was wearing a white, flower-patterned one-piece which belonged to Saeyeon, folded her arms and looked up at Upperclassman Nabom with cold eyes. Different to the lively clothes she’d normally wear, her current attire was sublimating her girlish modesty to adorableness, but the face she was making was ruining all of that. Even though she’d be cute if she stayed still.

“I’ve been looking forward to coming here today after all.”

And Upperclassman Nabom who was looking down at that Jaim was.....

“.....Uhm, why are you wearing your school uniform?”

School uniform, an attire which I’ve always seen. She giggled at my question.

“Oh dear, are you disappointed that I’m not wearing casual

clothes?”

“Slightly.”

She said that she was going to wear something pretty, so it'd be a lie if I said that I wasn't looking forward to seeing what she was going to wear. I've never seen this person in plain clothes after all.

My answer must have surprised her since Upperclassman Nabom opened her eyes widely, blinked a couple of times, before smiling again.

“If that's the case, then that's unfortunate. However, after going through the school regulations, it was advised that in order to not forget one's duty as a student, you should also wear your school uniform for casual occasions as well.”

“The only person in the world who would oblige to a rule like that is you, Upperclassman Nabom.”

Rather, was there a rule like that?

Upperclassman Nabom winked and continued.

“Honestly, the biggest reason is since it seems a certain someone didn't want to go on a date with me. Even though I made preparations and was also looking forward to it.”

“.....Uh huh.”

I knew she was teasing me anyway, but if she says it like this, then even I'll end up reacting a little. While I was trying to select my words, I felt someone pull on my pants so I lowered my gaze.

“That's a nice atmosphere you have there——? Dad——?”

Your true nature is showing, kid. Jaim glared at me while revealing her canines before turning her head towards Upperclassman Nabom's direction and looking unkindly at her as well.

“You as well, you thieving cat. You’re trying to hit on my dad even while in front of his daughter. Did you want to flirt that badly?”

“Hm? I hear a voice, but I don’t know where it’s coming from.”

“.....I’m right here.”

Upperclassman Nabom went as far as to raise her hand above her eyes in order to look around in an exaggerated fashion. Eventually, as if she had suddenly come to a realization, she looked down at Jaim and smiled.

“Ah, sorry. I couldn’t see you down there because of my breasts. You’re short by nature and you’re also underdeveloped after all..... By the way, how old are you, little girl? Are you a pre-schooler?”

“I-I’m not! You cow!”

The other side is showing her true nature in her own way as well. Because of the sight of the two of them disregarding, gnashing their teeth, and snapping at each other, everyone who was walking by the subway station turned to look at us. Please don’t look this way. I’m not with them. They’re strangers. Rather, why isn’t he here yet? I called him because I knew it would be like this.

“I’m sorry for being late! Did you wait long?”

Speak of the Devil, Nanda’s voice came from behind me.

“Do you know what time it is right now?”

More than that, it’s cringy if you say it like that! It’s like you’re late for a date or something. Once I turned my head while groaning.....

“Y-You.....!”

“I’m only late by 5 minutes. Hm? Jjaro, what’s with that face?”

As always, Nanda was displaying his usual refreshing smile. Although he was emitting a buttery atmosphere, as expected, a cool

guy will always be a cool guy. But, that's, I mean.....

“.....Why are you wearing a **sparkling sequins outfit**?”

I was barely able to push back my urge to act as if I didn't know him in order to ask him that question.

That outfit which should have gone extinct from the Earth about 20 years ago. There was a bunch of silver-colored sequins embedded into his dark purple blazer. They were really shining brightly underneath the March sunlight. Underneath his blazer, he was wearing a flower-patterned dress shirt that was, in its own way, at the peak of bad taste among dress shirts. Furthermore, he even had on a dainty butterfly necktie which was something that even made me want to latch onto him and beg for him to take it off. I lowered my gaze because I couldn't dare to look at his upper body any longer, but what came to my line of sight was his pure white pants and pure white shoes. Also known as the 'Bbek^[2] Shoes, Bbek Pants' style. Everyone who was passing by was looking at him with their mouth agape.

“I'm going to be hanging out with a cute little lady, my number 1 fan, so I should dress for the part, shouldn't I? How is it, little lady? Does it look good on me?”

.....Please, I beg of you. Don't wink in such a bizarre pose. I let out a sigh at Nanda's words which were overflowing with his imposing confidence. No, even if this kid is his fan or whatever, anyone who's sane wouldn't like someone wearing.....

“Shin Nanda Oppa.....! Wore that for me.....!”

“.....Hey?”

W-Who's this kid who has her hands gathered in front of her chest with radiantly sparkling eyes, has an expression that looks as if she's at her zenith of happiness, and is muttering to herself as if she were in a dream?

“That attire, after wearing that at his debut concert and being praised for having perfectly revived the retro-style, he never wore it again and it became known as his first-time limited performance outfit……! To be able to see it this close……!”

Nanda tilted his head at Jaim’s words.

“Huh? Little lady, how’d you know that I’ve been saving this outfit so I could wear it during my first performance?”

“I-It felt like that was the case for some reason! It’s super cool!”

“Is that so? Thanks. I see that you have a good sense of style, little lady.”

Fortunately, Nanda didn’t seem to think too deeply on Jaim’s comment as he grinned in response to her quick excuse. Good, good. That’s a relief.

“By the way, Jjaro, why are you so far away?”

“Who are you? Upperclassman Nabom, a weird person keeps trying to talk to me…….”

“Is that someone from a newly formed pseudo religion? How scary.”

Upperclassman Nabom and I had moved a distance that was just enough to make people think that we were unrelated to Nanda before we started to whisper to one another. Nanda shrugged.

“Well, sure my outfit may stick out, but isn’t that reaction going a bit too far?”

“Why do you think that, excluding Jaim, there isn’t a single person within a 30m radius of you? What’s up with your destructive fashion sense?!”

“Who knew that the day would come when Jjaro would complain

about my fashion sense…….”

That pose of pressing his hand against his forehead as if he were truly shocked was incredibly annoying. Rather.

“What’s wrong with my fashion sense?!”

“Since you’ve brought it up, I’ve been wanting to say this since a while back, but isn’t that tool belt too absurd?”

“This is my pride as a scientist! In order to be able to disassemble and uncover the truth about the things that I’m curious about at any given moment and place!”

“Then I’ll also say that this is my pride as a trot singer.”

He isn’t backing down. His comment makes me actually want to take my belt off right this instant.

Once I gnashed my teeth and glared at him, Nanda lowered his voice and spoke while glancing at Jaim and Upperclassman Nabom who had both started to fight again on the side.

“I squeezed in because they were like that, but it seems it wasn’t that effective. Well, I felt like it would end up like this. In any case, where’s Saeyeon? I know you invited me because you expected this would happen, but I thought Saeyeon would try to intervene as well.”

“Saeyeon is over there.”

Once I pointed at Saeyeon, Nanda tilted his head.

“……Why is she pouting like that?”

In a spot that was a short distance away from Jaim and Upperclassman Nabom, Saeyeon, who was wearing her favorite flowy fairy-tale princess-like dress, which she would always happily wear, pouted and turned her head away with a ‘Hmph!’ once she noticed my gaze.

“Well, there was a little incident this morning.”

This morning. While I was in the middle of looking through my clothes since we were going to go out anyway, there was a knock at my door.

“.....Jaim, if you barge in immediately after knocking again, then I’m not going to stay still.”

I heard a low and nervous voice.

“I-It’s me.”

“.....Saeyeon? What’s up?”

I was honestly surprised. It was the weekend so Saeyeon would normally sleep in, and since we were going to eat breakfast and go out during the afternoon, I was planning to take my time waking her up, but for that Saeyeon to be here?

“C-Can you open the door?”

“I’m asking you why. I’m getting dressed right now.”

“Then I’ll be coming in.”

“When I said I was getting dressed, I said it in a present progressive form! I didn’t say that I was already done! Kyaa! Kyaa!”

No, wait, it’s Saeyeon, isn’t it? She’s a kid anyway and we’ve already seen everything to see about each other’s body, so why am I acting like this?

The moment I thought that and stopped screaming, Saeyeon opened the door and revealed her face.

“Kyaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah?!”

I was honestly incredibly surprised. Terribly surprised. What is that? Seriously.

“Y-Y-Y-Y-Y-Y-Y-You, you, what’s with that face?!”

“Ehehe……. I tried doing makeup. How does it look? Do I look pretty?”

Make, up? Not special effects makeup? This isn’t SFX?

Saeyeon’s face, which I think was smiling timidly, was quite the spectacle. No, it wasn’t on the level of a spectacle. Please don’t look this way. You, turn your head away.

Two black eye blobs that appeared almost panda-like. Don’t imagine something cute just because I said she was like a panda . This wasn’t something cute like that but pitch black like a real panda. Her eyes were already naturally large, so the makeup made her look even more bizarre.

Her face was pure white like snow. Don’t think of something romantic just because I said it was pure white. This looked like white paint.

Her cheeks were colored in a peachy pink shade since that was supposed to highlight the cheeks in their own way. I’m saying this again, but just because I said it was peachy doesn’t mean that you should think of some fresh color. That’s……. That’s……. Ah, I don’t know.

I don’t even want to mention her RGB 255 0 0 bright red lips since they’re so frightening. Ah, damn it! I ended up mentioning it.

While looking like that, Saeyeon smiled. I think she was smiling.

“Jjaro, I asked you how you think I look.”

Looking at this any longer wasn’t good for my head. My SAN points were decreasing. Tissue……. Eh, there is none. I’ll have to clean this

off as soon as possible.

“.....Ah, who cares, get over here. I’ll clean you off.”

“W-Why are you trying to wipe it off? It’s been such a long time since I last did makeup.”

“Long time, my ass. This is your first time, isn’t it?”

“Well, yeah..... But still, I did it prettily.....”

Saeyeon moved side to side in order to avoid my hand and spoke. It’s hard to wipe you clean if you do that. I let out a shout because of my dropping SAN points and my growing annoyance.

“If you’re going to put on makeup, then do it properly! What are you supposed to be?! You aren’t a ghost!”

Saeyeon finally stopped after hearing those words.

Good, this is my chance. I quickly turned her head and rubbed her face clean with my t-shirt.

“Really, why did you play with makeup when you’re still a kid who doesn’t even know how to put it on? If you’re going to scribble on something, then do it on drawing paper. Now then, the other side. Turn your head.”

“.....”

After Saeyeon wordlessly turned her head, I finished cleaning her face. Although it was still messy since I had only rubbed her clean, it was better than before.

“Dang it, now I have to wash this shirt again.”

“Did it..... look, that bad on me?”

It must have been quite a shock to Saeyeon since she stammered fretfully and was looking up at me with strangely tearful eyes. I let

out a sigh.

“Yeah. It really didn’t look good on you. More than anything else, it’s too soon for you to be wearing makeup. Do makeup after you’ve grown a bit more.”

“.....But, I’m, an adult, mon. I even have a daughter, mon.”

“Yeah, yeah. Now then, let’s go eat.”

It was still morning but any sign of sleepiness from my body was already entirely gone. Honestly, I don’t think I should have breakfast right now, but I want to at least remove this occurrence from my memory while eating something.

While thinking about that, when I was about to put my hand on top of Saeyeon’s head like I would always do, Thud, Saeyeon blocked my hand.

“.....Saeyeon?”

“.....I’ll go home first. Jjaro, you can take your time getting dressed.”

Well, if she says so. Right when I was about to turn my head away, I remembered something.

“Ah, tell Jaim to set the rice up. If you’re up, then that means she’s up too, right?”

In response to my words, Saeyeon furrowed her brow and shouted.

“.....Jjaro, you idiot!”

After that event, Saeyeon kept behaving like this since then.

Nanda let out a deep sigh after hearing my explanation.

“Jjaro, you really are..... never mind.”

“What’s with that tone?”

Why is it that whenever I say something, people always respond after letting out a sigh first? Nanda glanced at Upperclassman Nabom for a moment before making a strangely serious face and speaking.

“Jjaro, I’m asking you this just in case, but are you aware that Upperclassman Nabom always goes around with makeup on?”

“Why should I?”

“Well, it’s fine if you don’t. But still, I think it’d be a good idea if you used your head a little.”

“Okay, what’s with your tone since earlier? If you have something to say, then say it straight.”

“Oh, now that I look at you again, you wore some pretty clothes, little lady. I’m sorry for realizing so late. Did you perhaps dress like that because you were going to meet me?”

So you’re ignoring me. Nanda waved his hand and walked towards Jaim. I could see Jaim, who had been baring her teeth and growling at Upperclassman Nabom, panic after seeing Nanda and quickly fix her expression.

“Saeyeon, are you all right?”

So, well, the timing was appropriate and I didn’t have anything else to do, so I approached Saeyeon and spoke to her. If she keeps sulking like this, then the mood would continue to be bad today.

Once I sat down next to Saeyeon, she puffed out her cheeks more and scooted away from me a bit as if she wanted to openly display how upset she was at me.

“Hmph. I purposely put on makeup since I was going to go out together with you and Jaim, but you wiped it off and called it

scribbles. That's so mean, Jjaro."

As I thought, she was still upset about that.

"Smearing something on your face doesn't make it makeup."

".....You should stop being shy and just tell me I'm pretty if you think I look pretty."

After saying that, Saeyeon glimpsed at me with red cheeks. All right, fine. I let out a deep sigh and gave her the answer she wanted.

"Okay. You're pretty, you're charming, so please stop being mad."

"Really? Ehehe....."

Did you cheer up after that single line? Isn't your revival too fast, girl?

As if a dried flower had been watered, Saeyeon smiled brightly using her entire face. While rubbing her cheeks with both of her hands, Saeyeon glanced at me and spoke. You look adorable if you do that.

"Uhm, Jjaro, then between Big Sis Nabom and me, who's prettier?"

"What? What are you saying all of a sudden?"

I have no idea what she's getting at. Saeyeon put both of her hands below her face like some sort of flower and looked back and forth between me and Upperclassman Nabom.

"Well, Big Sis Nabom is pretty and mature, but Jjaro, you wiped my makeup off because you thought I was pretty even without it, right? Someone who's pretty without makeup is prettier, right? Right?"

At the end, Saeyeon was only looking at me with eyes that were sparkling with hope.

.....Now that I think about it, it'd be a lie if I were to say, that I was completely unconcerned.

Thus, right when I was about to answer her.

Boing. A soft sensation touched my arm.

“Now then, let us go, Underclassman Jin Jaro. Since everyone is here now, the only thing left for us to do is have fun, right?”

“B-Big Sis Nabom?! Since when were you there?”

Thud. While I was being told that, I felt something soft touch my hand.

“Let's go, Dad! Instead of linking arms with that weird woman, let's go have a pleasant family outing together with your wife and daughter!”

“J-Jaim?”

“Wait! Don't run! Don't you see that there's a lot of people? I'm going to fall! Ah, sorry! Excuse us! Jaim, you need to stop pulling as well!”

I heard Saeyeon's voice behind me as I was being dragged while my arms were also sealed.

“I, I also want to link arms or hold......”

“I only have two hands, you know?! Rather, can't you help me a little?!”



“Behold and be surprised! This is the Yongsan Electronics Market! The Mecca of electronic goods, the land of advanced technology!”

No, the last part might be a bit misleading, but in any case.

If someone who’s unknowledgeable were to hear this place’s name, then they would most likely assume that this place was some sort of department store or shopping mall, but in truth, it would be more appropriate to think of Yongsan as a bunch of ‘districts’. Behind Yongsan station, there are a countless number of shopping areas that trade in electronics with the distinct characteristics that each respective shopping area specializes in. Almost every single electronic can be bought here. That is, of course, if you have enough money.

Furthermore, although I did say it might be misleading, it actually is a trove of advanced technology. Electronics that come out for the first time are released here and the people who are interested in technology and use Yongsan as their stronghold will make use of the items and give feedback. Although it’s difficult to see products that are still in their development or researching phase, you can experience commercialized electronics here faster than anywhere else.

“Is this a bazaar?”

“Dad, is this a museum?”

“No!”

But, these two girls……!

“No matter how I look at it……. Wow, this is nostalgic. I remember seeing this back when I was little.”

“Whoa, I’ve only seen these in pictures. Dad, buy me that.”

Yeah. I understand your feelings. I get it. If someone went around selling an i386 computer claiming that it was state-of-the-art technology, then even I would laugh. But, still……! Be that as it may……!

“Be quiet! This is currently the best at this moment in time! Don’t look down on modern practical science!”

“Why are you the one getting upset, Underclassman Jin Jaro?”

“Why are you the one getting mad, Dad?”

“Jjaro, why is the person getting upset you?”

“Jjaro, why are you upset?”

“I’m not!”

I grumbled and walked down the street. Not only were we loud, but since our group was rather peculiar to begin with, people kept looking at us from all over.

Well, of course they would. One guy with a tool belt wrapped around his waist, a guy wearing a sparkling stage outfit in this day and age and in Yongsan of all places, a girl who was wearing her school uniform even though it was Sunday and had a body that made universal gravitation occur, and two girls who were both wearing flowy one-piece dresses like a pair of sisters.

My eyes unconsciously went towards Saeyeon. I didn’t have any weird motives. I just wanted to see if she was still upset.

.....Truly, she’s a stylish and beautiful girl as long as she doesn’t open her mouth.

Her long and natural hair gave off an amber light as it received the sunlight. The flower pin in her hair and the way she wore her clothes didn’t make her look childish, but made her give off a refined feeling instead.

Her long and slender limbs moved energetically and she must have been talking with Jaim, who was walking alongside her, about something as the smile on her face wasn’t disappearing.

Tap, tap, the red enameled leather shoes which Saeyeon cherished tapped on the floor each time she took a step. Even those late-to-the-trend shoes matched her outfit and it all made Saeyeon appear like some young lady from a pictorial magazine.

“So, where are we going, Dad?”

“Since our goal is to buy you a portable game console, we’ll have to learn about the shopping areas for those.”

“Can’t we just randomly go into any store and buy one?”

I gave an explanation to Jaim who had asked that while blinking her eyes.

“Jaim, don’t look down on the Dungeon of Yongsan.”

“Dungeon? What dungeon?”

“Yongsan, in short, is a type of dungeon. Pathways that are intertwined in a complex manner, monsters that pop up here and there, and treasures that are placed between those. In order to obtain those treasures, we have to defeat the monsters and explore the area. A thoughtless amateur will simply end up losing their life. Speak of the devil. Look over there.”

In response to my words, Jaim turned her head and looked at the pitiful family that happened to be caught by a monster a fair distance away from us.

“Welcome ho, customer! How much information have you looked up before coming here?”

“Huh? Ah. I was planning to buy my son a game console…….”

“Kids these days love games quite a lot, don’t they? I’ll cheaply recommend you a good product, so please come inside. How about this? This has been trending recently so every kid carries one around. They say that if a kid doesn’t have one, then they even get bullied for

it at school. I'll keep this a secret from my boss, so I'll sell this to you, Missus, for a cheap price. The current net price is.....”

“.....Did you see that?”

“.....Yeah. I saw it. This is a scary place, huh.”

Upperclassman Nabom tilted her head.

“Oh dear, what's the problem, Underclassman Jin Jaro? It seems like that person was just kindly counseling those people, who don't know much about the products, and he even gave them a recommendation.”

“How foolish, Upperclassman Nabom. What happened there is nothing like that. The true taste of the Dungeon of Yongsan is the legwork and bargaining. That is the weapon of a warrior and the method to fight those monsters. If you get dazzled by such a simple speech, then.....”

That's why amateurs are no good. A child who always responds to kindness isn't suited to be here in Yongsan!

“By the way, Dad, Mom got caught over there.”

“What?!”

Once I quickly turned my head around, I saw Saeyeon a reasonable distance behind us and making a face that made it apparent that she had no idea what to do because she was caught by an employee who was trying to talk to her. Damn it!

I quickly ran to her, grabbed her by the hand, and dragged her back to our group. The panicking Saeyeon's eyes became wide because of my action.

“J-Jjaro.....?”

“Seriously, don't make me worry and follow us properly. How could

you get caught like that the instant I tell you to be cautious?”

I could only sigh. Yeah, in this current situation, Saeyeon was more concerning than Jaim. This girl is someone who will always respond to anything that’s said to her and won’t be able to budge an inch.

“That’s why, Saeyeon, don’t do anything weird and just stick right next to me. Okay?”

Because who knows what’ll happen if she ends up somewhere that I can’t see.

It seems she must have been surprised by my words, as Saeyeon, whose face was dyed red, blinked her eyes a couple of times before nodding.

“Ah, o-okay! I understand.”

“.....Why is your face so red? Do you have a cold?”

“N-No! I’ll definitely stick right behind you, Jjaro!”

“A-All right......”

As I thought, something’s weird. Saeyeon grinned happily before interlocking her fingers with mine. As if she wanted to prevent our hands from coming apart. Well, this much is probably fine. I simply turned my head.

“.....Ehehe.”

Saeyeon, who was grinning happily, glimpsed at Upperclassman Nabom a bit before leaning her head on my shoulder.

“Hey, Jjaro. Let’s link arms! That way I’ll be able to stick right next to you!”

“Link arms? Just grab Jaim’s hand. I’m worried about her as well after all.”

Saeyeon erased the bright smile on her face in response to my words and frowned.

“.....You’re a dummy, Jjaro.”

“You’re dumb, Dad.”

“Are you an idiot, Underclassman Jin Jaro?”

“Jjaro, are you stupid?”

“Can you guys stop attacking me as a quartet?!”

À À À

“Are you messing with me, kid?!”

“B-But.....!”

“There’s no buts or anything! I told you the game console you want doesn’t exist!”

“J-Jjaro, don’t be like that......”

Without hiding my annoyance towards Saeyeon’s words as she was trying to stop me, I poured my drink down my parched throat.

Several hours after that previous occurrence, we were at a fast food restaurant.

Even though we went around for several hours making bargains and proposals, this kid wasn’t satisfied. This isn’t it, I don’t like that, etc etc. It was apparent that everyone was tired, so we decided to have a light meal at a fast food restaurant and rest a bit before going

out again, but at this rate, we'll just end up like a merry-go-round that gets nothing done.

"But you said so, Dad! That you'll pay me back!"

"It's just a game console. Let it go. How do you expect to buy something that won't come out no matter how much you search for it?"

The portable game console that Jaim wanted was the model that comes out in the future. At this current time, it probably wasn't even being tested or even in the planning phase yet. There's no way that we'd be able to find that kind of item.

Saeyeon and Nanda, who didn't know the situation, were simply smiling awkwardly

since they most likely only saw this as a child throwing a tantrum. However, Upperclassman Nabom, who did know the situation, was silently looking at me.

"But....."

"Ah, seriously. If you have something to say, then say it properly! Yeah, I'm sorry that I broke your console, but why are you making this much of a ruckus about it?"

Because of my annoyed shout, the frowning Jaim finally exclaimed back at me.

"It's..... something Dad bought for me!"

"Bought for you? I did?Ah."

That was a surprise. For a second there, I was wondering what she was talking about.

With tearful eyes, Jaim spoke while trying to hold back her crying.

"It's the one and only thing, Dad has ever bought for me.....!"

“Hm? Jjaro, did you buy a game console for Jaim without me knowing?”

Saeyeon tilted her head because of Jaim’s words.

Ugh, this kid keeps making things complicated. I quickly tried to give her signals with my eyes, but it seems Jaim wasn’t able to take the hint.

I then tried to give Upperclassman Nabom a signal instead this time.

“.....Underclassman Ja Saeyeon, do you have a moment?”

In response to Upperclassman Nabom’s words, which were said because she had noticed my signal, the head-tilting Saeyeon turned her head towards Upperclassman Nabom.

“What is it, Big Sis Nabom?”

“I plan to go pick flowers, but would you like to go with me?”

“What do you mean by picking flowers?”

“.....Will you go to the bathroom with me?”

Upperclassman Nabom must have understood that curve balls didn’t work as she then threw a straight ball. Saeyeon nodded her head as if she finally understood.

“Eh.....? Oh, sure! Let’s go!”

Upperclassman Nabom turned to look at Nanda this time.

“You as well, Underclassman Nanda, if there’s something that you wanted to see separately, then how about going to check it out right now? You’ve been constantly with us until now after all.”

“Mm, sure. I’ll also go take a look around for a bit.”

The good atmosphere reader, Nanda, seemed to have understood Upperclassman Nabom's intention to give us some space as he nodded and stood up as well.

Upperclassman Nabom glanced at me for a moment as she left the table. She was telling me to have a good talk.

Thus, I let out a long sigh and spoke to Jaim who I was left alone with.

"I don't really know your circumstances, but can't you give up on this? Don't make dangerous situations like this."

".....I'm sorry about just now."

However, it seems Jaim wasn't going to cheer up anytime soon.

"If it's something I bought for you, then it should be fine if I buy you something now, right? You can fix your game console or buy a new one when you go back to the future."

".....There's no way Dad would fix it or buy me a new one."

"Didn't you say he bought that for you as well?"

Jaim pouted and answered.

"That may be the case, and it might be fine if Dad buys me a new one, but still, I don't want that for some reason. Moreover."

While drinking her juice out of her straw, Jaim looked at the seat where Upperclassman Nabom had been seated.

"I don't like how that weird girl came with us and is behaving like that even though this is supposed to be our family outing."

"Are you going to bring up something we already wrapped up? Isn't that why I invited Nanda? Also, she tagged along just in case you pulled something like this."

Jaim continued to pout as if she wasn't satisfied with that answer.

"Still, it's a family outing. It's our first family outing, so I don't like the fact that other people are here with us. I also don't like how that weird girl is acting as if she's concerned."

I thought that this kid would understand.

I wordlessly took a sip of my cola.

I invited Nanda with us and came to a place like this on purpose because I didn't want her to think this way.

The restaurant was filled with families since it was the weekend. Although I thought that this restaurant was a place that wasn't suited for family outings, I was apparently wrong.

Who knows. There's a chance that these families came out to shop together in order to buy home appliances, and there's also a chance that they came out here in order to buy their kid a game console just like we were.

While I was silently looking around our surroundings, Jaim asked a question in a cautious voice.

".....Are you bothered because you came out here with me and Mom?"

".....Yeah."

I nodded passively. Jaim let out a sigh because of my answer.

"I knew that was the case. That's why your expression has been like that, right?"

"As a groundbreaking pioneer, it's simply pathetic to look at these foolish, untaught masses."

Even though they're going to have domestic disputes, father and son disputes, and father and daughter disputes when they get home,

they have these happy expressions on their faces while they're here. Are they trying to parade to others that 'We're this happy!?' It's pathetic, that kind of cheap mentality.

"Dad, you really are twisted, aren't you? Do you have no plans to unwind yourself?"

"I'm not twisted. I'm the one who's normal."

"Haa, really....."

I contemplated for a moment if I should pull on Jaim's cheeks as she let out a sigh, but I stopped myself.

Jaim put her hand on her chin and looked at the family seated next to us.

"Dad."

"What?"

"You're the worst."

"You trying to declare war on me all of a sudden?! You brat!"

"Ubububububu!"

I pulled on her cheeks and let out a sigh shortly after.

"You really don't get bored of this, do you? Do you like it when I pull on your cheeks like this? Do you like it? Huh? Are you a masochist? You're a masochist, aren't you? Well, you did make some weird noises when I hit your butt. Is your hobby receiving spankings?"

"S-Suhap, sahying weiuh hings!"

"Speak Korean."

I let go of her cheeks and, smack, her face returned back to normal.

Are these actually made out of rubber?

“Uuu……. Haha, hahaha!”

“Did this kid finally go insane……? Or did you like it that much?”

Do you want me to pull your cheeks more? Jaim, who was receiving the gazes of others because she had laughed herself to tears, wiped her tears away with her finger.

“Yeah, I like it when you pull on my cheeks.”

“……So you really were a masochist. I’ll respect your preference.”

“Jeez! I said that’s not it!”

Jaim slightly averted her gaze and rubbed her cheeks.

“Dad, you’re, at the very least, responding to me.”

My mouth, which was about to say something, inadvertently stopped.

“You know, Dad, future Dad seriously treated me as if I were an invisible person back when I was in the future.”

Even while we were within all of this surrounding noise, I could clearly hear Jaim’s voice.

“Of course, he’d occasionally react when I talked to him, but that was really just a ‘reaction’. I said something so he answers. It was like that.”

Even if they were in the same space, they were simply in the same space.

You are you and I am me. That was it.

“I ate by myself, slept by myself, and I would always play by myself. Instead of feeling lonely, I felt really bored because of that.

That's why when I told him that on the day he came home after a long time, he bought me that game console."

That's why I thought that he was just busy. He was properly worrying about me. He bought me that so I wouldn't be bored.

"But he continued to not come home even after that, and when he did, he would occasionally buy me games and end it with that. Then, one day, I got grumpy. Yeah, I knocked over a display cupboard while pretending it was an accident."

"You, that's....."

"I know. I know it was a bad thing to do. But still..... I thought that I had to do it at least once."

Jaim smiled faintly.

"Do you know what he did once I knocked it over? I thought he would scold me or tell me it's okay, but instead, he silently cleaned up the display cupboard. He threw away the things that were broken and lifted the display cupboard back up. He didn't even sigh. He didn't even say a single word to me. He just, cleaned it up as if it had coincidentally fallen over."

That's why this kid.....

"It was then that I realized. Ah, Dad really did have no interest in me whatsoever. To him, buying that game console for me was like tossing me something so I would stop troubling him, it had no other meaning than that. Even if I were to cry or get mad here, he'll just ignore me."

Jaim beamed. It was a bright smile, but something about it.....

"That's why, you 'reacting' to me properly is enough to make me happy, Dad."

However, this smile, was nothing but bright.

“You get upset if I mess around with you, you pull on my cheeks, we worked on Multi together, and you even worried about me for sleeping late. That’s more than enough for me. I’m glad I came here.”

Because of that smile, I could only be curious.

This kid, **was like me**. She had the same experiences as me.

Time always spent by yourself. Parents who didn’t care about you.

Didn’t have something like family memories, nor were you sure if something like that even existed.

But why, why isn’t this kid thinking like **that**?

How, is she able to think like **this**?

Even though she had that sort of family. Even though families were like that, why?

Is it because she’s still a kid?

“.....Is that so.”

“Although I’m not satisfied since you won’t unite with Mom. Uhm, Dad. Since we’ve come this far anyway, be honest. Are you sure you aren’t a eunuch, Dad?”

“I said I wasn’t, didn’t I?!”

“Hahaha.”

Jaim laughed and pushed the edges of my mouth up with her fingers.

“That’s why you should stop making this Darkness of Darkness expression and smile for a change. Okay? This adorable daughter is even playing with you, isn’t she? Ebebe^[3].”

“If you don’t remove your fingers right this instant, I’m going to

bite them off.”

“For you to want to lick and suck on your daughter’s fingers…….”

“You brat! I stayed docile but you’re really getting on my nerves!”

Once I raised my fist, Jaim furtively moved out of the way and stuck her tongue out at me while laughing.

“So, did you not have fun today, Dad?”

“I didn’t, you brat. Do you know how much trouble I had to go through because of you? If you were going to be like this in the first place, then we shouldn’t have come here.”

Jaim slightly lowered her eyebrows because of my grumbling.

I lowered my drink.

“I have two things to say.”

“……What is it?”

“First, regardless of whether I’m the genius scientist of this generation who will leave a mark in history or not, it’s impossible to repair something and make it perform like it did during its original state. You can’t make a computer during the 18th century, right?”

“……Huh?”

Jaim, who was averting her gaze as if she were upset, started to open her eyes widely.

“Second, this is merely a reward for helping me with my work. It’ll be troubling if you have some sort of weird misunderstanding because of this. I’m a man who doesn’t live in debt, so I’ll repair what I had broken. Pure and simple.”

“……Dad, does that mean…….”

I stood up and nodded.

“We’ll be changing our course after we’re done eating. From purchasing to repair.”

We’re in Yongsan so we should be able to find the appropriate parts. Of course, it may be impossible to make a game console from the future function as it normally did, but if it’s my ability, then it’ll probably be possible to make it run at roughly the same performance rate.

Then that means we’ll need one more thing.

“Also, you have to help me fix it. I’m not sure if you’re useful as a daughter, but I know that you’re useful as my assistant. All right?”

“.....Okay!”

Jaim smiled brightly in response to my words.

“Don’t smile. I’ll get attached.”

Sheesh, what’s she so happy about?



The sun was starting to set.

“Nanda Oppa, I’m sorry. All you did was look around with us.....”

With a tired face, Nanda smiled at Jaim’s apology.

“It’s fine. Well, I did want to have a look at some sound systems, but I can do that when I come here again later on. Also, it’s my

meeting with an adorable little lady, my number 1 fan, so I can handle this much effort.”

“Nanda Oppa……!”

“Can you stop trying to hit on a little kid? You pedophile.”

“Jaro, I know you’re jealous, but let me off the hook this time. I’m acting like this because she’s cute. No matter how much of a doting dad you may be, a misunderstanding like that is rude.”

“If you talk rubbish one more time, then I won’t fix any mechanical problems you may have in the future.”

Nanda simply grinned at my threat.

“Rather than that, Jaro, haven’t you been hitting it off well with Upperclassman Nabom? As I thought, is it because the two of you are in the same club or is it because you’re both the same type of scientist?”

“It’s because of the topic. That’s it.”

“Oh dear, Underclassman Jin Jaro, was your relationship with me only on that level? For you to play with my heart…….”

“Upperclassman, you as well, I’m going to get mad if you say something nonsensical one more time.”

I say that, but she was definitely helpful.

Jaim may be talented when it comes to technological stuff, but she’s still a little girl. She isn’t effectively helpful yet. That’s why I asked Upperclassman Nabom for a favor while we were shopping. If she knew what components were needed for the repairs or if she was knowledgeable in that regard, then to teach me about them. Upperclassman Nabom grinned with sleepy-looking eyes and spoke.

“Do you finally intend to get a bit closer to Miss Jin Jaim? I see that

leaving the two of you together was effective.”

“I simply have a tendency to repay my debts. In any case, can you?”

Upperclassman Nabom tapped her finger on her lip as if she were contemplating my request.

“Mm…… Well, I’m not allowed to give you information about the technology, but if it’s only this much, then it should be fine to help you. If Underclassman Jin Jaro were to work on it by yourself, then you’ll most likely be unable to obtain any results and simply end up consuming your time and budget, like you did with Multi.”

Although I bared my teeth and glared at her, she simply laughed it off. Just you wait. I’ll make you regret those words later on.

“At any rate, thank you.”

In response to my words which I had said out of courtesy, Upperclassman Nabom beamed.

“Think nothing of it. I should be helping you as a fellow scientist, and I’ve also put you in my debt with this.”

“……I feel like my gratitude has completely waned away.”

“……Uhm.”

In that instant, Jaim’s voice could be heard so Upperclassman Nabom lowered her gaze.

“What’s wrong? Are you upset since you want to monopolize your dad but he’s busy talking with me? Electra^[4] complex?”

“T-That’s not it! And you aren’t my mom! No, that’s not what I wanted to say…….”

Jaim, who appeared to be hesitating, seemed to have made her

resolve as she then spoke.

“.....T-Thank you for the help.”

“Hm? What did you say?”

“S-Stop messing around! I know you heard me! That..... since, we'll be able to fix my game, because of your help..... I'm grateful, for that.”

Jaim averted her gaze and muttered that out loud as her cheeks became dyed red. Upperclassman Nabom chuckled and nodded.

“Yes. That's great, isn't it?”

How nice and warm. But these two have certainly become a bit closer today. They kept going at each other's throats even when we were buying the parts for the repair, but the two of them being scientists by nature must have been a factor in this since they also had these and those sorts of conversations.

“Now then, we bought everything we needed, so shall we go back? It's getting late and I have to also work on the repairs once we get home. Nanda, you're fine with that as well, right?”

“That's fine with me. Shall we go then?”

“Ah, Jjaro, wait.”

Right when I was about to turn around, because of Saeyeon's voice, I wound up stopping midway in order to gaze at her.

“What? Is there something else you want to look at?”

“No, not that. It, might be a bit out of the blue, but......”

“If you have something to say then say it straight.”

Saeyeon fumbled with the edge of her dress nervously.

“Can you…… buy me a gift as well?”

“A gift? Why should I?”

It really was out of the blue. Saeyeon appeared to be embarrassed as she kept glancing at me while twisting her body.

“No, well, I came along today as well, I was helpful, and I recommended a game and even gifted it to Big Sis Nabom. Furthermore, this is a family outing, so after this, with just the two……. No, the three of us, I wanted to play around for a bit longer…….”

“How was that helpful? You only made more problems.”

I let out a sigh and spoke.

“We got in trouble since you kept picking up and putting down parts without any knowledge. If you’re going to help, then do it properly.”

Although it seemed like she was trying to help, she’d get random employees involved and say things like, ‘How about this?’ ‘Jjaro, they said this is good!’ even though she didn’t know anything about machines. Since she kept touching products that we weren’t going to buy in the first place, people kept looking at us with annoyance. We even got in trouble because she had knocked over a product once.

“Was I…… not helpful?”

I snorted in reaction to Saeyeon’s words which she had said while lowering her eyebrows as if she were being scolded.

“How much help could a kid be?”

“Jjaro, aren’t you going too far?”

Nanda spoke up after looking at Saeyeon who had become gloomy because of my comment.

“She did her best to come this far with us today, so you should buy her some clothes as thanks. Jaim is wearing Saeyeon’s clothes, right? I saw a department store on our way here. You should spend some time together as a family.”

“With what money?”

Do you know how expensive clothes from department stores are?

“Saeyeon has a lot of clothes anyway. Saeyeon’s parents are coming home soon, so we can ask them to buy her clothes when they get here.”

If it’s Saeyeon’s parents, then they would be delighted if Saeyeon came up to them and asked them to buy her clothes. Saeyeon was basically the type of person who only wore the clothes that her mom had bought for her. Although I wonder if that’s something she should still be doing as a female.

Saeyeon seemed to falter because of my answer and fiddled with the edge of her dress more.

“But, it’s been a long time since we last left the house together like this……. We’ve, never gone on a date after we became husband and wife either…….”

“Date? Do you even know what dates are?”

“I know……. Dates are when a boy and girl who like each other are together…….”

“If you say it like that, then would me being in the club room with Upperclassman Nabom be considered a date?”

Though we aren’t a boy and girl who like each other. In response to my words which I had said while laughing, Saeyeon’s face became grim as she was slowly becoming gloomier.

“……Ah.”

And, for some reason, Jaim's face as well.

"So Jjaro was really cheating with Big Sis Nabom.....?"

"Why does it turn out like that? I'm just saying."

"That's right, Underclassman Ja Saeyeon. As I told you before, Underclassman Jin Jaro and I merely have a 'physical relationship. Although it does feel like a date."

"Can you stop saying weird things?"

Once I leered at Upperclassman Nabom, Jaim pulled on the edge of my clothes.

"D-Dad. Let's hurry up and go home. I'm tired."

"You are? Yeah. We did walk around a lot today. I also have to fix your game console. Look, Jaim said she's tired as well."

In response to my words, Saeyeon lowered her head and mumbled.

".....We're going since Jaim wants to?"

"Ah, seriously. Saeyeon, can you stop acting like **a child**? That's why....."

"I said let's go home!"

Because of Jaim's abrupt shout, I stopped talking.

Although it seems Jaim had unintentionally shouted that out since she covered her mouth with her hands immediately after, there's no way that her already spoken words could be taken back.

Saeyeon turned around,

and ran straight towards the subway station.

"Hey, Ja Saeyon!"

I shouted again at Saeyeon who didn't stop when I had called out to her.

“Where's a kid like you planning to go by yourself?! You can't even ride the subway alone!”

Saeyeon stopped for a moment, turned her head,

bit her lips, and with tears filling her large eyes,

“.....You're a dummy, Jjaro!”

She shouted that at me before continuing to run away.

20XX-March-X. Any weather is good☆

Please circle
today's weather.



Today, Jjaro finally reciprocated my feelings. I'm so happy that my pen is shaking. I've been worried until now, but as I thought, Jjaro also likes me back! I'm so happy!

Mom and Dad went on another vacation yesterday. They said that Jjaro will take good care of me. That's why, since Jjaro kept paying attention to only his own stuff ever since winter break started, I acted a bit spoiled. This was a good opportunity after all.

As I expected, Jjaro was playing with his vacuum cleaner, so I purposely sat on Jjaro's bed and bothered him while reading manga. Although he ended up kicking me out after treating me nicely at first, that's okay. We're going to be spending our time with just the two of us for the following month after all! Furthermore, Jjaro only did that because he was shy.

At night, I asked if we could sleep together just in case, and Jjaro meekly agreed. But I knew that he was definitely going to go home once I fell asleep, so when I asked if he could stay with me throughout the entire night, he said that we should sleep while holding hands!

We really slept while only holding hands, but that's okay. Since it means that Jjaro likes me enough to suggest that we should sleep while holding hands!

I was honestly surprised, but I was still happy. Even now, Jjaro is sleeping right next to me.

It was cute when I poked his cheek with my pen and he made a face. It's a relief that I hid my diary underneath my pillow. I think I'm going to have a happy dream tonight.

Translator's Notes

1. [\[↑\]](#) Camellia Flower is a Korean story about a boy who likes a girl but is too embarrassed to admit it. Basically, he's your typical 'tsundere'.
2. [\[↑\]](#) 'Bbek' is just a stronger pronunciation of the word 'white' in Korean.
3. [\[↑\]](#) 'Ebebe' is basically her making a noise as she plays around with the edges of his mouth with her finger.
4. [\[↑\]](#) A complex where a girl gets competitive with her own mother in order to monopolize the father for herself. [\[Wikipedia\]](#)

7. Real Intention

We dispersed like that.

“.....Jjaro, when you get home, immediately tell Saeyeon that you’re sorry.”

Nanda turned to me and said that right before getting on a bus that was headed towards a different direction since he apparently had lessons today.

“Why should I.....?”

“Don’t be like that and just do it, okay?”

He had a sympathetic look on his face for some reason.

Once the bus left, I shrugged and turned towards Upperclassman Nabom. I’m not really sure, but this person is probably headed in the same direction as us.

“Then, let us go as well.”

However, Upperclassman Nabom simply smiled.

“No. You two should go together. I plan to **back out** here. I’ll see you tomorrow.”

She then courteously lowered her head, turned around, and disappeared down a different path.

This was my first time seeing her behave like this so I tilted my head. I thought that she would say some nonsensical joke like she would normally do.

And, Jaim was.....

“.....”

“Hey, don’t chew on your nails. That’s not pleasant to look at.”

Inside the subway on our way home. Once I let out a sigh and said that because Jaim had been anxiously chewing on her thumbnail beside me, Jaim tilted her head.

“Nail? What are you talking about?”

“You’re chewing on your nail right now.”

In reaction to my words, Jaim froze while her thumbnail was being held in her mouth.

“Fix that habit. It looks as if you’re mentally unstable.”

I spoke while looking at my nails which had been cut to the point that they couldn’t be chewed on.

Yeah, I was like that as well at one point. I chewed on my nails whenever I felt restless. At some point, once I read in a book that this habit usually forms in kids who don’t receive parental love during their early childhood, I broke the habit. Albeit it was hard to stop.

But, I don’t recall this kid ever having this sort of habit?

Jaim spoke while looking down at her hand as if she were mumbling to herself.

“.....I, might have made a really big mistake.”

“What are you saying all of a sudden?”

“It, might have been better if we didn’t go there today. No, we shouldn’t have gone there. It might, it might be all my fault.”

“What do you.....”

Jaim, who had been muttering as if she were talking to herself,

turned to look at me.

“Dad, when we get home, tell Mom that you’re sorry.”

“Nanda said that as well and now you too? Why is everyone saying that?”

“Please. I beg of you, don’t ask me why. Okay?”

Because Jaim’s voice was trembling with anxiety,

because she had fanned the strange anxiety that I had been feeling since earlier, I nodded for now.

À À À

“Ah, Jjaro, Jaim, you’re home?”

.....I was nervous for nothing.

Honestly, I was worried as well. I didn’t expect Saeyeon to get that upset and go home by herself after all. I was concerned whether she’d be able to even properly get home or not, and I was worried that I’d come home only to discover that she was still pouting.

But.

“M-Mom? Are you all right?”

“Hm? What do you mean?”

Saeyeon tilted her head at Jaim who had asked that question while stammering.

“No, but earlier…….”

“It’s fine. This isn’t the first time Jjaro was like that to me.”

After puffing out her cheeks and glancing at me, Saeyeon smiled.

“I’d be a **kid** if I were to get upset about something like that, right?”

Yeah, that’s right, you.

The first thing we saw the moment we got home was Saeyeon’s smiling face.

Rather than feeling relieved, I felt more as if I should let out a sigh for worrying about nothing. Even Jaim’s mouth was hanging open as if she were dumbfounded.

“In any case, Jjaro, I’m hungry.”

I let out a sigh at Saeyeon’s large grin.

“……Yeah. Let’s eat dinner.”

I had dinner, watched TV, and took a bath like usual, and after all that, even my doubtful mind towards Saeyeon’s attitude had disappeared.

It’s not like I don’t have a conscience. I know that my words earlier were harsh to a degree. I was more blunt than usual. I had become sensitive because I kept worrying about the word ‘family outing’ which Jaim had kept mentioning. I admit it. A man like me will honestly admit his mistakes.

However, since it seems Saeyeon wasn’t worried about that at all now, that means it’d be foolish of me to worry about it by myself.

“……Something isn’t right.”

But it seems Jaim was on a different wavelength than me.

“What isn’t right? It’s Saeyeon anyway.”

In response to my words, Jaim furrowed her brow as she was laying down on the bed.

“No, but **that** was definitely supposed to happen.”

“**That?**”

“Yeah. I’m certain that after **that** happens…….”

Jaim made an ‘Oh shoot!’ face in reaction to my question and shook her head.

“No, it’s nothing. But still, for the time being, tell Mom that you’re sorry, Dad. Just in case.”

“Why? Just in case Saeyeon is still sulking?”

“It doesn’t matter.”

I’m not really sure what the issue is, but well, I already intended to do that anyway.

“In any case, are you really sure you don’t want to work on the repairs today?”

“I’m tired. I want to sleep today.”

Jaim shook her head as she was laying on my bed.

It was my turn to put Jaim to sleep today. Up until now, I would put blankets down in an empty room and make her sleep there, but I’m allowing her to sleep on my bed just for today as a special occasion.

“Are you not going to sleep with me?”

“Don’t make me laugh.”

I snorted and sat on the side of the bed as I stroked her forehead. This isn't strange. My hand was simply bored.

Once I brushed her hair to the side, it must have felt nice since Jaim then giggled while her tired eyes were still half-closed. That laugh made me feel somewhat embarrassed, so I turned my head away. This isn't strange either.

"Hey, Dad."

"What?"

I felt Jaim's lips press against my cheek which I had turned because she had called out to me.

".....What are you doing?"

In response to my question which I had asked as I rubbed my cheek, Jaim grinned broadly.

Jaim then raised the blanket up to right below her eyes, making it seem as if she wanted to hide her smiling face, before speaking.

"Thanks for worrying about me a bunch today. Even though it must have been annoying."

".....Yeah."

"I might have misunderstood you and Mom, Dad."

"What's that supposed to mean?"

Jaim fiddled with the edge of the blanket.

"I thought that you didn't like me. Ever since I first got here, you never acted as if you liked me nor did you ever try to treat me nicely. Of course, you did say it was okay for me to make those plastic models, but I thought that was similar to later in the future when you bought me the game console because you thought I was bothersome."

Jaim's expression was slightly dark as she said that.

"But that wasn't the case. Dad, although you were the one who broke it, you told me that you'd fix my game console. Even with Mom, your relationship with her was better than I expected. I thought that, in the future, you had fought similarly like before and that everything was definitely my fault, but the two of you don't have a relationship that could break apart that easily."

But as she said this, her face became bright once more.

"I'm glad I came to see you and Mom, Dad. Coming here was a good idea. I feel like there's nothing for me to do now. The future definitely must have changed."

I turned my head.

Even though she has no basis, even though she doesn't know anything. How is she able to say these things?

Nevertheless, I tapped on Jaim's head before standing up.

".....Then sleep tight. I'm off to bed as well."

"All right. Good night, Dad."

".....Good night."

When I looked back at her for the last time, Jaim waved at me slightly.

Click, I closed the door and came out of the room. I guess I'll be sleeping on the floor for the first time in a long while.

I stretched my body which had become exhausted after moving around a lot today. Saeyeon, who was sitting on the sofa, giggled at the noise I made that was similar to a moan.

"What's the occasion? You never let anyone sleep in your room, Jjaro."

“Well, even I’m tired, so the kid must be more tired, right? I figured I’d indulge her for just today.”

“You feel a bit like a dad today, Jjaro.”

“Be quiet. Rather, aren’t you going to sleep, Saeyeon? It’s past your bedtime.”

It may have been early evening for me right now, but it was the dead of the night for Saeyeon.

“I’m going to sleep now.”

“All right. I’ll go and wake you up in the morning, so.”

Right when I was about to enter the empty room while saying that, Saeyeon’s hand grabbed onto my own.

“.....Saeyeon?”

Saeyeon looked straight at me and spoke.

“Jjaro, can we sleep together tonight?”

“.....What?”

“Jjaro, it’s been a month since then and you haven’t slept with me even once during that time. Even though you’d always sleep by yourself or with Jaim, you haven’t slept with us as a family or even with just me.....”

Saeyeon pressed her body closer to mine as if she were trying to urge me.

“Hm? We used to sleep together in the past, didn’t we? We’ll simply be sleeping together as a family. We’re also husband and wife, so doing something like sleeping together is fine, isn’t it? I, I won’t do anything weird like last time. It’s fine if we sleep together while only holding hands, no, it’s fine if we just sleep together. Okay?”

Saeyeon's eyes as she said that were hazily trembling in the light, and because she looked somewhat anxious, because she looked somewhat desperate,

I let go of her hand.

"I told you before, didn't I? I told you that it was just for that day only. Why are you acting like this all of a sudden?"

"No, but....."

"You've been able to sleep by yourself until now with no problems, haven't you? Are you still upset about earlier? Okay. Next time, we'll go out and buy some clothes together. That's good enough, right?"

"It's not that. Please? Let's sleep together."

"Ah, seriously. Are you going to keep acting like a child?"

Saeyeon's expression slightly froze up because of those words.

"Seriously, what's your problem today? In the morning you tried to put on makeup or whatever and ended up bothering me, and at the end of the day, you got upset and left by yourself. I didn't want to say this before, but do you know how embarrassing that was for me? If you get upset like that, then you'll also trouble Nanda and Upperclassman Nabom who came with us. You ruined the mood in the end as well."

Due to my exhaustion, I ended up blurting things out inadvertently.

"But..... Jjaro, you kept paying attention to only Big Sis Nabom and Jaim, and you told me to stick close to you but you wouldn't link arms with me....."

Saeyeon started to become teary.

"You didn't answer when I asked if I was prettier or if Big Sig Nabom was prettier either."

“What a childish jealousy. If I have to compare you and Upperclassman Nabom, then obviously Upperclassman Nabom would be higher.”

I could only sigh. I knew she was childish, but what’s up with this?

I turned around and spoke in a tone that sounded as if she wasn’t worth talking to anymore.

“I didn’t want to say this, but grow up a little. You’re not a kid anymore, but you keep behaving like this. Try acting a bit more mature.”

“.....Okay. Jjaro?”

“Ah, seriously. What is it now?”

Her voice called out to me once more from behind. The instant I was about to turn around in an annoyed manner, I felt something soft press against my back.

Arms wrapped around my chest. I could feel strength go into those arms as they held me tightly.

Saeyeon had, hugged me.

Because of that action, I turned my head in order to say something.

However, I couldn’t. This time our lips met.

A moist, warm, and soft sensation. Her smooth lips touched mine for a moment before backing away. I didn’t even have the time to be stifled.

“.....Ehehe.”

It seems she was feeling bashful as Saeyeon shyly smiled and slightly turned her head away.

“You, what are you doing?”

Saeyeon answered my question while stammering.

“E-Earlier……. Big Sis Nabom told me. I asked her what I had to do in order to be more like a couple with Jjaro, and she said that I should tell Jjaro that I want to sleep together, and if you still refuse……. Then to do, this.”

Saeyeon’s cheeks became flushed as she said that.

“T-That’s why, Jjaro may say that, and it may, be, embarrassing, but……. If Jjaro, likes me, then she said that you’ll surely accept me…….”

This is weird. This is definitely Saeyeon, this is definitely Saeyeon’s face, she’s definitely talking with Saeyeon’s voice, and moving with Saeyeon’s body, but this feels like a completely different person.

Not like a child, but——.

She’s like a normal **girl**, from her age group.

“———**Jaro.**”

Jaro. Jin Jaro. My name.

Not the ‘Jjaro’ that sounded as if my name was pronounced with a short tongue, which Saeyeon would normally say, but Jaro.

“……Jaro, you, like me as well, right?”

On Saeyeon’s face which had said that while looking up at me, the tears that had been sparkling in her eyes since earlier had now formed more vividly.

Confusion spread across that expression. She saw my face after all.

“……I asked you, what do you think you’re doing?”

She saw my face, that looked as if it were on the verge of exploding, after all.

“J-Jaro……?”

“I’m asking you, why you’re acting however you please and doing things like this!”

I clenched my fist and shouted without holding anything back. Surprise and panic started to spread across Saeyeon’s face. Saeyeon was barely able to open her mouth while stuttering.

“W-What’s wrong, Jaro? Did, I do something wrong?”

That expression that looked as if she couldn’t understand what had happened. As if she had no idea what was going on, the edges of her half-opened mouth trembled.

“Ah! That, l-lip touching thing, she said it was okay. Big Sis Nabom told me. She said that may be possible, but it’s fine. It’s fine if two people who love each other do it. S-So it should be okay. I wasn’t trying to suffocate you to death or make you sick, Jaro, so…….”

“I’m not talking about that! I’m not upset because of that kind of stupid lie!”

My teeth pressed together. It hurt because I was putting too much strength into my jaw. But I couldn’t take my strength out. Blood had rushed to my head, so I couldn’t hold back any longer.

“Then, why are you mad, Jaro……?”

Saeyeon looked at me with tear-filled eyes.

She clearly had the same childish and foolish expression on her face, but there was a distinct feminine atmosphere hidden underneath that.

The atmosphere of a girl who had been refused by the boy she likes for a reason that she couldn’t understand and was hurt by it.

“Is it, because I kissed, you……? Because I hugged, you?”

From those eyes, large drops of tears fell one at a time.

“If that’s not it, then is it because I wanted to sleep while holding hands, and have another child, is it because of that……?”

Although she closed her eyes tightly as if she were trying to hold back her tears, they continued to flow, “But, I, was uneasy…….”

Saeyeon wiped away her flowing tears and continued.

“Until yesterday, I really thought it was okay if Big Sis Nabom and Jaro got along. Of course, I was a bit jealous, but……. Still, it was okay. Because I’d definitely win in the end. Because I’m Jaro’s **wife**.”

That’s why,

“I wasn’t bothered at all even if Jaro and Jaim bonded. She’s our **daughter** after all. Since she’s someone who I’m going to be as close to as I am with Jaro and also look after.”

But,

“I became uneasy today. While I’m a child, it felt like you saw Big Sis Nabom as a woman. It also felt like you thought that Jaim was the child you had to look after more, so I’m nervous. Hm? Jaro.”

Before I knew it, Saeyeon had grabbed onto both of my trembling hands.

“**Childhood friends** are things that grow distant over time, aren’t they? You forget about them, right? I don’t remember any of the friends I used to play with when I was little. I thought that I was going to end up like that with you, Jaro. I didn’t want that. So I thought that it would be fine if Jaro, just, looked after me.”

Saeyeon simply stared straight at me and continued to speak.

“I know that you’re only looking after me because it’s your **job**, Jaro, but that’s all because you’re too shy to admit it. Because, even if

your words are like that, you've always taken care of me. Ever since we were little, and even now. If time passes like that, if I slowly, naturally continue to stay by your side, if I gradually become mature, then I believed that I could really become a **family** with you, Jjaro."

Saeyeon smiled.

"At that time, my heart pounded."

Contrary to her eyes which were trembling with anxiety, her voice was clear.

"When I pressed my lips against Jaro's, my heart pounded a lot. It felt good. I did feel stifled like Jaro said, but I became stifled because I liked it so much."

Her cheeks turned red as if she were recalling that moment, "For that reason, because I was so happy about what happened, because I knew that you gave an evasive lie since you were embarrassed, Jaro, I wanted to brag about it. And even more than that, I wanted to make both of our hearts pound as I continued to be with you, Jaro."

So, I sincerely tried bumping into you, Cooked for you,

Showed you my body while taking a bath together,

And tried putting on makeup.

"I'm, not a child."

Saeyeon raised her hand on top of her chest.

"My chest may not be as large as Big Sis Nabom's, but they grew this much, I grew this tall, I'm struck with magic every month, and I was also able to have a child."

Even though she doesn't know what that means.

She lowered her hand to her stomach and continued.

“So whenever I think about you, Jaro, my baby room occasionally throbs and becomes ticklish. I was happy when you asked me if we could sleep while holding hands, Jaro. I believed that you also liked me just as I had expected and that you wanted to have a child with me and become a family. I was so happy about that.”

Even though she was making an absurd, childish misunderstanding, only that expression, was the expression of a girl.

“So, tell me.”

Saeyeon smiled as a tear flowed down.

That smile, different to the idiotic smile that I’ve always seen until now, because it felt like it would shatter into a thousand pieces if I tapped on it, because it was like a dam that was about to burst due to all of the things that had piled up until now, “Jaro, does your heart not pound when you look at me?”

“I told you——.”

The moment I was about to reply, I heard a door open with a creak. Saeyeon and my eyes were automatically drawn towards the source of that sound.

“.....Mom, Dad.....?”

Jaim, with her eyes wide open, was standing there while holding the door half-open.

“What, are you doing right now? Are you two, fighting?”

“Jaim, go back inside!”

I unintentionally shouted at her. Although Jaim looked as if she didn’t know what to do, she was soon able to speak as if she had made her resolve.

“.....No, I won’t go back inside. I heard everything.”

Damn it, why are things turning out like this?

I've been doing well until now.

I've been protecting this relationship well until now.

Saeyeon wiped away her flowing tears once more before gazing straight at me.

“Jaro, tell me. Am I not that charming? Do I seem like a child no matter what I do? Can you not look at me even a slight bit differently?”

“Wait, Mom. That's…….”

“Jaim, I told you to go inside, didn't I?!”

“Look at me and tell me!”

I looked at Jaim and shouted at her while Saeyeon looked at me and shouted as well. Jaim, who was hesitating because of those shouts, yelled as well.

“S-Stop it! Don't fight! I'll make Dad normal, so…….”

‘Ah’, Jaim gasped out loud before covering her mouth. However, there's no way that I would mishear those words when they had already been spoken.

“Make, normal……?”

“N-No, that's not what I meant…….”

“I see, so that's what it was. I felt like something was weird.”

Before I knew it, the amount of time Jaim spent with me had increased compared to the time she spent with Saeyeon. I didn't know what that meant at that time, but, “You, you thought I was the biggest problem, so you were trying to change that, weren't you? You acted cute on purpose.”

But now I understood.

In the end, this kid had completely used me.

In order to make me believe that, ‘This isn’t so bad’, by making me bond with her, my daughter, and by doing so, improving the relationship between me and Saeyeon. She had merely changed her strategy to that.

Since the innocent Saeyeon didn’t know what ‘uniting’ meant.

In order to make me, since I knew the meaning, believe that something like a family wasn’t a bad idea.

“.....Yeah.”

Jaim nodded her head as if she had no other choice now.

“B-But Dad, that’s not why I did that. It’s just, I wanted Mom and Dad to become a family, so I thought that I should try to at least change things a tiny bit.....”

“I don’t want to hear it.”

People have continued to deceive me, just like **that day**.

While hoping arbitrarily, sympathizing arbitrarily, and cherishing an arbitrary hope.

Yes. To be honest, I actually had hope. I was hoping that things would be different this time compared to **that day**.

Since she had received the same scar as I did, I thought that this kid would be able to understand me as well. That’s why I wanted to continue this relationship a bit, a slight bit longer.

Even though I felt the malice, which I had maintained on my own until now, fade away, I became intoxicated by this warm atmosphere and even hoped that these days would continue.

But I was just being fooled.

This kid didn't understand. She simply pretended to understand. In order to change me, in order to achieve her goal, and while only thinking about her own circumstances. Just like those two people.

Arbitrarily, completely arbitrarily, I'll do this, you do that. They had played around with me however they wanted as if it were an obvious thing to do. This person and that person too.

"Jaro, tell me."

Saeyeon looked at me and spoke in a doleful voice.

"Did I do something wrong? Did I do something bad to you, Jaro? Then I'll fix it. I won't say that I want to cook anymore. I won't do makeup. I'll be mature. I won't act like a child. I'll do everything you want, Jaro. So, tell me, please, tell me that you like me."

While shedding tears, and while forcing her trembling lips to smile.

"I, like you. I like you, Jaro. So, Jaro..... you like me as well, right?"

The word 'like' which I have heard a countless number of times now.

However, the weight of it was different this time.

The 'like' that was used until now was the like of a child.

And right now..... it was the like, of a girl.

That's why I couldn't feign ignorance this time.

I took in a breath, and spoke the words that had been contained within my mind until now.

“I, hate people like you.”

“.....What.....?”

In that instant, Saeyeon made an expression that I had never seen before.



That expression, was the same expression that I would always make on the inside whenever I looked at Saeyeon.

Yes,

I don't like Saeyeon.

There's no way that I could like her.

I hate families. Families are relationships that are tossed aside whenever they aren't needed. Things like the love of a family are delusions and everything else is a lie. To this very day, I've lived believing in that and that was what gave me confidence.

However, there was a person who was constantly next to me that contradicted my belief point-blank.

The girl who always received the love of her family.

If there was a person who was within a darkness that was so dark that you couldn't distinguish where the ceiling and floor were, beside a person who received all of the attention and applause while standing in the spotlight, then you'll know this feeling.

I have always been alone. I had to overcome everything with my own strength. There was no one who would help me and there was no one who I could trust.

I would have preferred if that was just it. There aren't only one or two people who live like that in the world after all. There are plenty of other people who live a hard life like I do. I could have found solace by thinking like that.

But Saeyeon?

She had a 'family' who she could trust and would constantly be next to her in order to help and look after her at all times. Even if they did separate, in order for her to not feel that emptiness, they even

asked me for help.

———Since this old lady can no longer look after Saeyeon, I'll leave her in your care, Jjaro.

Despite being on death's door, a 'family' who would make a lifelong request to a completely unrelated kid who merely lived next door.

"Every time you approached the me who was like that, do you know how miserable I felt about myself?!"

Why me.

Even though I dealt with everything by myself.

This child even asked me, an unrelated person, to be a part of her family as well.

"Even though you're just a kid who doesn't know how to do anything. Even though you go around saying happy words like, 'I like you', 'husband', and 'wife'! Even though you attach yourself to me and hand me all of your problems since you can't do anything on your own!"

That's why I looked after Saeyeon. As my **job**. Since my livelihood would also be assured if I looked after her. Simply a business relationship. Simply a dry relationship. I wouldn't have to feel inferior if it was like this.

Since it was another family. Since it was a separate world, that was irrelevant to me.

"I don't need something like sympathy! I don't need some ridiculous empathy like 'Since I have a family and you don't, I'll be your family'!"

———Since it's Jaro, who's like our son, we'll help you if you look after Saeyeon.

Her new family member had even given me this request as well and so it made me think as I received their sympathy.

There's most likely no one who cares about whether the household they're **working** at as a nanny is harmonious or an utter mess. Additionally, nothing matters as long as I'm able to secure my own footing. It'll be forgotten and disappear. That's all I had to do.

So in order to achieve that, Saeyeon mustn't learn about being a girl.

She had to remain as a child who I simply looked after, a child who didn't know what the meaning of liking someone meant, and a child who simple-mindedly liked the older brother next door who took care of her and had no feelings beyond that.

I raised her like that. I taught her however I wanted so she wouldn't listen to others and taught her that I wouldn't lie to her.

A kiss is nothing. It's simply a dirty act involving the contact of lips.

Bathing together is nothing. It's merely a task where I have to wash the kid who I'm taking care of.

Cooking, doing the laundry, and holding hands, all of these things were to that degree.

Sleeping while holding hands, that was simply on the level of a kid being bothersome since they had to sleep by themselves.

So, from all those things, what this girl wants now——

Without holding anything back, I yelled while looking straight at Saeyeon.

"I'll say it straight. Since the very beginning, I have never seen you as a woman, and to this day I have never wanted something like a daughter. I don't need something like a family in the first place! So get out of my sight!"

Along with the sensation of my heart beating painfully, I also felt unburdened.

Yeah, I said it. I said the words that I've been wanting to say.

Saeyeon, with a face of disbelief,

“.....Jjaro, you dummy! How could you.....!”

shouted that.

“Then, uu, if that's the case, hhk, why, why were you.....!”

While her large eyes were filled with anger and shedding tears,
“———Why were you nice to me?!”

she grabbed things like books and other objects that were in the living room and threw them at me as she shouted, “—————
Uu!”

and after swallowing down her tears, she left.

After the sound of the front door closing resonated, silence followed.

“Dad, chase after Mom right now! Hurry!”

“Be quiet! This is **all your fault!**”

Towards that voice that had broken the silence, I yelled as loudly as I could.

“What are you going to do about this?! Everything ended up like this because of you! I won't be able to do my **job** of taking care of Saeyeon from now on!”

“Now's not the time to be worrying about that! Hurry up and go after Mom! Tell her that you're sorry! Get on your knees and apologize!”

Jaim was crying as she yelled. Much too desperately, as if her body

was moving faster than her words, she cried out while kicking at me and hitting me with her fists.

“Quickly! Hurry up and chase after her! It can’t end like this!”

“Everything ended up like this **because you came here**, kid!”

In that instant, Jaim’s expression was like a still-life that was forcefully trying to insist that it was a portrait.

“Dad, what did you say……?”

“None of this would have happened if you didn’t come here, right?! Saeyeon and I could have continued to spend our time peacefully together while hiding our feelings from each other, but it’s all your fault!”

That’s right, it was all this kid’s fault. All because of this brat.

“You didn’t care about what happened to Saeyeon anyway, right? Protecting the peace of the family or whatever was all just an excuse! In the end, you merely did whatever you liked!”

“No! I was properly trying to make Mom and Dad like each……!”

“You say that, but you wound up getting drunk on the fact that I was being nice to you!”

In response to my shout, Jaim, who was barely able to utter her words, froze.

Yeah. It’s simple if you think about it a little.

Ultimately, when she said she’d make Saeyeon into a woman, turn me into a proper person, and protect the peace of our family, it was all a lie.

——That’s why, you ‘reacting’ to me properly is enough to make me happy, Dad.

This kid had merely become drunk on the fact that her father, who treated her coldly in the future, was treating her well right now.

She didn't care about her mom who she couldn't even remember.

Her mom who was different to her expectations and was like a child. Her mom who couldn't do anything. Her mom who didn't know what kissing was and believed that babies were born if you go to sleep while holding hands. She didn't need a mom like that.

Instead, she had simply chosen the dad who didn't treat her coldly, properly had conversations with her, messed around with her, bathed together, and worked on a project together.

Because it was beneficial to herself. Because it was what she wanted.

If it were for that sake, then Saeyeon and my feelings didn't matter.

“.....No, I, didn't come here to do that......”

“Regardless of what you planned, that's how it ended up!”

With her mouth half-open, Jaim looked at me with unfocused eyes.

Before I knew it, the foot that was kicking me and the fists that were hitting me had come to a stop, and her hand was now simply grabbing onto my pants.

“Dad, then, did you, not need..... me.....?”

I then shook off her hand that was holding onto my pants and spoke. I was tired of this now.

“I have never wanted something like you even once in my life.”

I left behind Jaim, who had frozen in place, before entering my room and shutting the door behind me. Just in case, I locked my door completely. Where that kid sleeps and how she does it wasn't relevant to me.

On the floor, there was a stupid toy robot vacuum cleaner with only a mannequin head attached to it moving around. What are you laughing at?

I felt needlessly annoyed and kicked it once. It made a clunk sound and moved. My foot hurt more.

À À À

“.....Hey, kid.”

Yeah, there was no need for me to have said that much

Once the heat had left my head, my reason had slowly started to return.

“Do my words not sound like words to you, kid?”

Throwing this kid out the door wasn't the right way to get rid of her. I have to coax her properly and ask Upperclassman Nabom. As I thought, regardless of her observation or whatever, she needs to take her away as soon as possible.

“Ah seriously, I get it. I was wrong. My words were a bit harsh.”

If you think about it, Saeyeon and I had a relationship that was going to end up like this since the beginning. As Saeyeon had said earlier, even if we idly stayed together and got married or whatever, the end would have still wound up like this.

“Are you listening to me, kid? Why are you in the corner?”

In that regard, this kid had taken the wrong step, but the world has always been a place like that. Living by yourself isn't that bad. Do

your best to live by yourself using your own strength when you go back to the future.

“I’m not mad. No, I’m not angry anymore, so come on out.”

However, no matter how much I called out to her, the kid refused to come out from the corner next to the sofa. Does she want to play hide-and-seek in the middle of the night or something?

“.....I’m, sorry......”

.....Wait. Something was off.

“Hey, kid?”

“.....Hiik!”

Once I peered my head over the sofa, the kid looked terrified and backed away. She’s already against the wall anyway. No, more than that......

“.....You, what’s wrong?”

Eyes filled with fear. Her cheeks were trembling as if she could break out in tears at any moment.

“What’s with the blood on your hand. Where are you hurt.....?”

“Uu!”

I grabbed onto her arm when she tried to bring her bleeding fingers to her mouth. Although the kid was now trembling like a quaking aspen due to my action, it seems the very thought of even running away didn’t pop up in her mind.

“.....What is this.”

Blood was oozing from her nail. She must have bit it off since the edge was rough. Nearly half of her nail was gone. No, what could have happened for this......

“Open your mouth. Open it.”

“Uu, uuu, uuu…….”

Her mouth was filled with the nail she had bitten off. I felt like I was going to vomit the moment I saw the blood smeared on it.

Why, why is this kid doing this?

“I-I’m sorry……. I-It’s my fault, so…….”

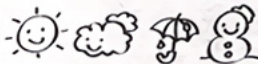
In that instant, I recalled the words that Upperclassman Nabom had once told me.

———‘Information contamination’ is a severe problem.

I had underestimated those words.

20XX March X

Please circle
today's weather.



It's over. Everything is over.

I didn't know this would happen, I didn't know it would end like this.

No, for some reason, I had expected this. Ever since that day, I did think that this might happen in the end. But I didn't think it would actually happen.

Since we lived peacefully until now, I thought that that would continue on forever. I thought that my time spent together with Jaro and Jaim would last without end.

I was too young. I was much too young.

I shouldn't have said that.

I can't even put strength into my hand. I can't believe that this is the end.

It would be nice if this were a lie. It'd be nice if this were all a dream and I'd wake up on that day again, then I could have dealt with the situation a bit more skillfully. But that's probably a delusion as well. Even that has broken completely.

Although Jaro's specialty is fixing broken things, he can't fix this. You can't fix broken things.

In the end, everything had been decided since the beginning.

8. Experiment

“Huh, oh, isn’t it Jaim?”

“Hi, Jaim!”

“You came here with your dad today, huh?”

“Is it okay for you to come to school?”

“By the way……. What’s wrong with Jaim?”

My classmates welcomed Jaim, who they hadn’t seen for a while since Jaim had stopped coming to school, but their expressions soon changed into puzzlement once they saw Jaim’s state.

“It’s nothing. She’s just feeling a bit sick.”

“What happened to Jaim’s hand? It’s completely wrapped in bandages.”

“Her face as well……. Was there a problem or something?”

“Jaro, your face isn’t a joke either, you know?”

That’s obvious. I wasn’t able to get a wink of sleep last night.

“Jaim, what’s wrong? Does it hurt a lot?”

“Uu, uuu……. Uuuuu…….”

Jaim backed away from my classmates who were trying to approach her while talking to her in a friendly tone. However, she couldn’t possibly escape since I was holding onto her hand. Although she was also incredibly terrified of holding hands with me, it couldn’t be helped. I couldn’t leave her like this after all.

“Go away, you guys. You’re scaring Jaim.”

“Why would Jaim be afraid? We didn’t do anything.”

“If she’s scared, then wouldn’t it be of you?”

They chuckled as if they had said a good joke. Yeah, it’s exactly as you guys said. She’s probably more afraid of me. Regardless, “I get it, so go away already!”

Because of my shout, all of my classmates shut their mouths.

“Uu, uuk…….”

Moreover, because of my shout, Jaim, who was already in a state of panic, became even more terrified and tried to pull her hand away from me in order to place even the slightest bit more distance between us.

“……Hiik.”

Because I had turned my head to look at her, she became so bewildered that it appeared as if she held her breath, “I-I’m sorry……. I-I won’t do it again…….”

So while lowering her head, she trembled as if I were going to scold her at any moment.

“……No. It’s fine.”

I couldn’t even let out a proper sigh. The edges of my mouth were twitching.

Within one day, just how many things have changed within a single day?

The terrified Jaim became more nervous because it seems she was afraid of my action, but it couldn’t be helped. Regardless of whether this kid was the source of the problem or not, I couldn’t leave her like this.

At first, I thought that she was doing this on purpose.

Like the time I had tried to gain the attention of those two people, I thought that this kid must have been doing the same thing.

Because she was like me. Because she had a similar past as I did.

But that wasn't the case. It wasn't on purpose. I could at least tell that much. That's why I couldn't leave her be.

Also, throughout that entire night, Saeyeon didn't return.

“Hi, everyone! Good morning!”

In that moment. The back door of the classroom opened and I heard an enthusiastic greeting. The same greeting and giggle which I've heard every single day until now.

Because of Saeyeon's appearance, Jaim's face became further consumed by fear.

However, everyone must have felt that something was out of place.

She hadn't slept at all. I could tell. I've been watching over her until now after all.

Her large eyes were saturated in exhaustion, and her soft cheeks, which used to be perfect to pull on, appeared to be lacking any elasticity right now. If it were a normal girl, then she would most likely know how to cover all of that up with makeup, but the childish Saeyeon didn't know how to.

Both her child-like face and her physique which didn't suit her had no energy in them. Her shoulders were drooped and her clothes were wrinkled. Only her strengthless giggle that was trying to sound energetic, was doing its best to emanate her usual atmosphere.

However, I didn't say anything.

Playing house was over.

In the end, everything has an opportunity. Even things like a

childhood friend becoming just a person who lives next door and then becoming a stranger. Whether it's because of the flow of time or an occurrence like this.

An existence which possesses, since the very beginning, a defect that will make it break down, will have no other choice but to break down when the time comes.

It can't be fixed, nor do I intend to fix it.

I was tired of being delusional.

So, even if Saeyeon is hurt, and no matter what expression she makes, I don't care about what happens to Saeyeon since she had heard all that from me yesterday.

Once I turned away, I heard them talk behind me.

"Saeyeon, did Jaro bully you **again?**"

"Jaim's state is weird as well. Don't tell me he put his hands on you **yesterday as well?**"

".....What?"

Because of the weird sensation I felt at that moment, I turned my head around despite knowing that I shouldn't pay attention to them.

Our classmates were surrounding Saeyeon. They looked at Saeyeon with worried expressions on their faces and spoke.

"No matter how you think about it, aren't Saeyeon's parents going too far? Just because he lives next door, they asked Jaro for a favor. Even though it's clear that Saeyeon doesn't like it."

"Yeah. Saeyeon, as I thought, wouldn't it be better to do something for Jaim's sake? Although I'm not sure how you two even had a daughter when you don't get along....."

"Wait, what are you guys talking about?"

Once I stood up and asked that, different to their previous expressions, they gave me hostile looks and pointed at Saeyeon.

“That’s the case, isn’t it? Jaro, you, you did something to Saeyeon and Jaim yesterday as well, right?”

“Even if you dislike Saeyeon, isn’t putting your hands on Jaim as well going too far? You definitely did something severe, didn’t you?”

Their reaction this time was clearly different to back when I had entered the classroom with Jaim for the first time. They were responding as if I hated Saeyeon since the very beginning.

When I inadvertently turned to glance at Jaim, Jaim trembled in fear and avoided my gaze. I was somehow able to grasp the situation due to that action.

Information contamination, memory manipulation. That incomprehensible emotion I felt when Jaim appeared for the first time.

But, it was different to that time. In spite of myself, I felt relieved.

Yeah, I’m uncertain of the reasons, but if they all know that I dislike Saeyeon, if they believe that we’ve always had a bad relationship, then even Saeyeon, who was scarred by my words, wouldn’t be able to approach me.

I had thought that. I pleaded for that to be the case.

However,

“.....**Jjaro**, what happened to Jaim?”

I know. Since it’s Saeyeon, since she’s a child, since she’s so kind-hearted.

I knew that Saeyeon would approach me because of their words.

But it would have been better if she didn’t come.

“Jaim, look at your mom.”

“.....Uu, uuuu......”

Because Saeyeon had drawn near and asked Jaim that while grabbing onto her shoulders, Jaim acted as if she had been caught for doing something bad and twisted her body in order to escape my hand.

“Jjaro, what’s wrong with Jaim? Hm?”

“I don’t know.”

“You don’t know.....? Did something happen after what happened yesterday? Hm? She was so bright up till yesterday, so isn’t it weird that she’s suddenly like this? Is she hurt somewhere? What can we do? What happened? Hm? Jjaro.**Jjaro!**”

“Shut up!”

Because of those words, I couldn’t hold back any longer.

“I’m sick and tired of it! That attitude of yours!”

Why did she approach me?

Despite having heard those words, having been scarred, having cried in front of me, having shouted that I was a dummy or whatever as loudly as you could, even though you must have shut yourself in your room and cried, As if nothing happened, as if those things didn’t matter, as if you didn’t care about what happened, as if you had already forgotten about something like that.

Even though everyone was acting as if they knew that this was the case, even though they believed that our relationship was bad since the start, even though she should be smart enough to at least understand that.

As if she didn’t care about the gazes of the people around her, as if

right now wasn't the time to be concerned about that.

Even though she knew that I had played around with her however I pleased, even though she knew that I had lied to her, even though she knew everything, despite that.

Every time you're like that, every time you show such a radiant appearance,

every time you show such an honest and upright appearance, do you know how miserable I feel?

Because it feels like you're mocking the twisted and crooked me, because it feels like you're making fun of me for still being bound by something like that, my shadow thickens.

Do you want to stay as such a good kid? How pathetic do you want to make me before you're satisfied? Fine. Do what you want.

"If you're that worried, then take her and ask her yourself!"

I pushed Jaim towards the hesitating Saeyeon and stood up.

"W-Wait! Jaro, isn't that going too....."

".....Get out of the way."

I pushed aside my muttering classmates, who couldn't possibly block my path, and slammed the door shut as I left. Because I wouldn't be able to endure if I stayed there any longer.

My irritation didn't stop.



“Congratulations, Underclassman Jin Jaro.”

Upperclassman Nabom clapped as she said that.

“.....What are you congratulating me for?”

“Hm? Didn’t everything end up as Underclassman Jin Jaro had desired?”

In my hideout, the ‘Creative Science Club’ club room, where I would always meet Upperclassman Nabom. I could hear her words clearly since there was no one else here.

“As Underclassman Jin Jaro wanted, a problem has occurred with Miss Jaim. Furthermore, everyone now believes that your relationship with Underclassman Ja Saeyeon has always been bad since the very beginning. Now, just as Underclassman Jin Jaro had intended, I’ll be taking Miss Jin Jaim away. Aren’t you happy?”

Upperclassman Nabom smiled and bowed her head.

“Well, I’ve been really indebted to you throughout this time, but still, Underclassman Jin Jaro, I see that you take care of your work with certainty. I expected you to take more time.”

There wasn’t even a single drop of emotion within Upperclassman Nabom’s face as she said those words while smiling. Thus, it was hard for me to say anything.

“Wait. Jaim ended up like that, but you’re congratulating me?”

I was barely able to squeeze out my words.

“Is there a problem?”

Upperclassman Nabom asked me that as if she were truly surprised.

“You intended to do this since the beginning, didn’t you?”

Yeah. I did. I planned to do this since the start.

The instant the bothersome kid caused a problem, I was going to report it to Upperclassman Nabom and have her take the kid back to the future. I was planning to do that, but.....

“What are you going to do about the problem that has occurred here?”

“That’s irrelevant to me. I absolutely hate bothersome things.”

Upperclassman Nabom answered so cleanly that it almost sounded refreshing. What is she saying despite having shoved people around however she pleased until now?

The moment I was about to get upset, Upperclassman Nabom added.

“There’s nothing more for me to do here.”

“What about the time paradox? If Jaim goes back like this, then.....”

“What are you talking about, Underclassman Jin Jaro?”

As she said that, the smile that Upperclassman Nabom made, was an expression that I was seeing for the first time. She has always been that type of person, but this smile was a first.

A mocking smile that bluntly appeared as if she were asking me if I were stupid.

“The type of time paradox which Underclassman Jin Jaro is thinking about doesn’t exist.”

“.....What did you say?”

“I’m certain that I told you before. ‘I came here in order to prevent a problem from occurring because of Miss Jaim’. It seems that Underclassman Jin Jaro had misunderstood something.”

While chuckling to herself, Upperclassman Nabom walked towards me while brushing her fingers along the top of the table.

“It is indeed similar, however, the problem which Underclassman Jin Jaro is thinking about will not occur. **The side where the problem will occur is on Miss Jaim’s side.**”

“What is that supposed to…….”

Before I could even finish my sentence, I remembered.

At one point, I had asked her a question. I asked her if I ‘united’ with Saeyeon like Jaim wanted and Upperclassman Nabom had suggested, then wouldn’t a time paradox occur.

Upperclassman Nabom had told me back then as well. She had told me that if there’s a problem and Jaim is the reason, then she’ll have a reason to take her back.

At that time I believed that if I tried to unite with Saeyeon, then a reason to take Jaim away would be made since that would cause a time paradox.

But that wasn’t the case. Reality doesn’t change. The only thing that will change is Jaim’s memories. Only an ‘information contamination’ will occur. Like now.

“Isn’t it interesting? Even if the cause changes, the result will not change.”

“Then, in the end, that means…….”

“It means that everything Miss Jaim has done was in vain since the beginning.”

Even while speaking those cold-hearted words, Upperclassman Nabom smiled.

Yeah. That would be the case. I understood.

Eventually, I'll most likely continue to look after Saeyeon just like before.

Since I had twisted her into a way that suited me.

A child who couldn't properly become a woman would definitely choose the boy she likes who lives next door.

Then the aftermath is obvious.

Jin Jaro and Ja Saeyeon, will end up giving birth to Jin Jaim.

Jin Jaro and Ja Saeyeon, will end up fighting and breaking up.

Jin Jaro and Jin Jaim, will end up being incapable of getting along.

Because the past doesn't change.

"Well, though I did hope that everything would turn out a bit better, things have already wound up like this so it shouldn't matter now. There's the saying that 'the end justifies the means'."

Upperclassman Nabom tapped on her lips as if she were thinking about something before continuing.

"Well, although it seems Miss Jin Jaim's Memory Manipulator has malfunctioned due to the information contamination, that goes beyond my field of expertise. It doesn't seem like it'll cause any additional harm either."

Upperclassman Nabom beamed and gave an explanation.

"The Memory Manipulator works by altering the perception of the people around them towards the direction the user desires. It seems that because of Miss Jaim's information contamination, it has made everyone perceive your relationship with Underclassman Ja Saeyeon as having always been bad. Isn't that great?"

Upperclassman Nabom then stood in front of me and gave me a military salute.

“Once again, thank you for your work, Underclassman Jin Jaro. Additionally, congratulations. Now you won’t have to see your daughter anymore.”

“Don’t tell me, you were planning this since the very beginning……?”

Due to a strange chill that went down my spine, I asked her that while mumbling.

How she would say nonsensical jokes, how she had tempted me while displaying a friendly appearance, how she had made Saeyeon jealous, how the conclusion had ended up like this, —— Big Sis Nabom told me. I asked her what I had to do in order to be more like a couple with Jjaro, and she said that I should tell Jjaro that I want to sleep together, and if you still refuse……. Then to do, this.

This was all, planned……?

“Who knows……?”

In response to my question, Upperclassman Nabom answered while tilting her head.

“You may think whatever you wish. As I told you before, I’m a government employee, I hold efficiency as my highest priority. You may accept whatever’s most convenient for you.”

“How, could you do such…….”

“Rather, the one I’m unable to understand is you, Underclassman Jin Jaro.”

While continuing to tilt her head, Upperclassman Nabom asked.

“Underclassman Jin Jaro, you clearly said that you hated families, did you not? From the start, you tried to get rid of Miss Jaim and you merely forced yourself to stay with Underclassman Ja Saeyeon despite disliking her. Isn’t this a good thing? Why is your face like that

even though everything has turned out how you wanted?”

Yeah. That was the case. Things have become like I wanted. Jaim will disappear and I’ll go back to my normal life. Although everyone now perceives my relationship with Saeyeon as having always been bad, that was good in its own way. I was finally able to get rid of my bothersome luggage and live by myself just as I have always wanted.

The maid robot that I had been aiming to make has been completed for now. Although it’s still in its initial stage, I’ve piled up a lot of research data. With this, I’ll be able to make something more advanced next time.

The backing from Saeyeon’s parents may come to a halt, but it’s not like my livelihood will come to a stop as well. I still have the royalties from my patents. I could also get a part-time job or whatever and maintain my livelihood with that. It’s already been a long time since I’ve become familiar with living by myself. If anything, I’ve been trying to live way too easily until now.

Even though everything has turned out how I wanted.

“Well, things have become slightly tiresome since I didn’t expect Underclassman Jin Jaro to bring Miss Jaim to school, but……. I should be able to take care of it, so, Underclassman Jin Jaro, you don’t have to concern yourself that far. I’ll handle things from here.”

I didn’t know what she meant by that, but I had to at least ask her this much.

“Jaim, when she goes back to the future, will she be able to return back to normal?”

“No. That’s impossible.”

Without waiting to think for even a single second, Upperclassman Nabom answered flat out.

“In the future, you cannot fix a problem that has happened

in the past. Once Miss Jaim returns to the future, she'll receive a punishment for traveling through time illegally, and, although she will receive treatment there, due to the characteristics of information contamination, a full recovery will be impossible."

"Then that means....."

"It's fine, isn't it?"

Upperclassman Nabom smiled and brushed past me.

"In any case, please coordinate the story properly. Because of what you had done, Underclassman Jin Jaro, I have to go through some hardship."

".....What? What is that supposed to....."

Right when I was about to turn around, Upperclassman Nabom had already left.



".....Saeyeon, didn't I tell you several times to not bring her to school?"

"Ah, that's..... Uhm....."

Our homeroom teacher, who had a gorilla-like body, scratched his head with the end of his ballpoint pen and spoke in a troubled voice. The other teachers in the teachers' room had perplexed looks on their faces.

"Ah, never mind. In any case, what's wrong with the little missy?"

In response to those words that were said with a sigh, Jaim, who had been looking down while holding onto Saeyeon's hand, became bewildered and shrunk back.

"T-This morning, it seems that she woke up not feeling well."

"Is that so. Hm……."

Although our homeroom teacher glimpsed at me as if Saeyeon's answer was suspicious, he shook his head as if it were fine and looked at me and Saeyeon.

"I heard your explanation before, but allow me to ask again."

Our homeroom teacher took a strangely long breath before speaking. I felt a sense of dread and anxiety for some reason. This person only talked like this whenever something big had happened.

"That little girl, is she really your cousin?"

I didn't reply. Saeyeon quickly answered instead.

"S-She's really our cousin! So……. Uu……. I-In any case, she's our cousin!"

"……Haa."

Our homeroom teacher let out a deep sigh and turned to look at me.

"Jaro, don't get me wrong and listen to me. Although I did it knowing that you wouldn't like it, it was something that I had to do as your teacher."

What is he trying to say?

Our homeroom teacher tapped his ballpoint pen against his desk a couple of times.

"I called your parents."

“.....What?”

Despite having prepared myself for what he had to say, waves of cold and hot electricity shot through my entire body.

“Why did you call them without asking me?!”

“Hiik.....”

Because I had yelled while having forgotten that I was currently in the teachers’ room, Jaim panicked once more. The other teachers furrowed their brows, but our homeroom teacher simply nodded his head.

“Yeah. I knew you would say that, Jaro.”

“If you knew, then you shouldn’t have called them! Why did you contact those people?! Without saying a single thing to me, how could you.....!”

“Jin Jaro.”

Tap, our homeroom teacher lowered his pen and let out another sigh.

“It was weird no matter how much I thought about it, so I gave them a call and they both told me that they didn’t know anything about this. They weren’t aware of any relative like that, and even if they did, they said that they wouldn’t have asked you to handle it, Jaro, since there’s no reason for them to do that.”

Although my fists were shaking and my heart was pounding so furiously that it was difficult to breathe, I did my best to stand properly and listen to what our homeroom teacher had to say.

“So I called you both here in order to ask you again. Saeyeon, since I can’t contact your parents because they’re on vacation, I’ll ask you. Is that little girl perhaps your cousin?”

“T-That’s what I’ve been saying. She’s my cousin who I said I’d take care of for a while…….”

“She isn’t.”

“Jjaro?”

In response to my words that had cut her off, Saeyeon looked at me.

“……Jaro, what did you say just now?”

While clenching both my teeth and fists, I spoke as if I were spitting out my words.

“She isn’t my cousin or Saeyeon’s cousin. We’re simply keeping her around because she calls Saeyeon and me Mom and Dad.”

All right. Everyone’s going to be that way, huh?

Saeyeon, Upperclassman Nabom, our homeroom teacher, those two people, everyone.

——You intended to do this since the beginning, didn’t you?

——Be quiet! This is all your fault!

That’s right. I intended to do this from the beginning. That’s right. Everything was this brat’s fault from the beginning. We were simply keeping around a bothersome and annoying existence who would be better off gone.

If things have already come this far, and if the situation is going to help me, then there was absolutely no reason for me to go through any more hardships.

Our homeroom teacher let out a sigh because of my answer.

“……No wonder I couldn’t find her family registration or anything else no matter how much I searched for them. Then who exactly is

this little girl?”

“T-Teacher, that’s not it. Like I said…….”

Although Saeyeon desperately tried to make up an excuse while panicking, there’s no way that she would be able to make a proper excuse with a kid’s brain.

Our homeroom teacher waved his hand at Saeyeon as if he no longer had a need to hear what she had to say and turned to talk to me.

“Then tell me the truth this time. Who is this little girl and why you’re looking after her. The other teachers are worried as well. The little girl is still, well, a little girl, and there are also weird rumors going around about you two among the other students.”

I didn’t answer. Our homeroom teacher turned his gaze.

“……All right. Then I’ll ask the little girl first. Little girl?”

“Hiik…….”

Due to the sight of me keeping my mouth shut, our homeroom teacher turned his head towards Jaim.

Although Jaim was terrified and trying to run away, it seems Saeyeon wasn’t able to adapt to the situation yet as she had put more strength into her hand and was anxiously looking at our homeroom teacher.

“I’m not a scary person. I’m not trying to scold you either. Now then, tell me. Can you tell me who you are, little girl? Where did you come from?”

“……Ah, uu, so…….”

Jaim looked around as if she were asking for help. However, the other teachers were still just looking this way with sharp eyes. There

was no one here to help her.

“S-So, so, ah, uh, uu…….”

Because of the sight of Jaim being unable to talk properly, our homeroom teacher forcefully smiled with his gorilla-like face before speaking in the gentlest voice that he could muster.

“That’s it. You can talk slowly, so take your time. Oh right. Do you want a piece of candy? Here, it’s good.”

However, Jaim backed away as if the piece of candy had been coated in poison. She desperately tried to pull her hand away from me as if she were pleading me to let her escape, but I didn’t release my grip.

“I-It’s, so, me, no, I, uu, am…….”

“Okay, good. You’re what?”

Eventually, Jaim realized that the only way to escape from this situation was to talk, so she hesitantly opened her mouth.

“……I, ca,me, fr,om, the fu, ture…….”

Our homeroom teacher’s face slightly hardened because of that answer. Jaim must have thought that he was about to scold her so she then spoke quickly.

“M-Mom, and, Dad, that, since, I was, young, fought, eventually, Mom, left, home, D-Dad, said, i, it was, my fa, ult, s-so, if I, went back, to, the ti, me, when M-Mom, and Dad, were close, a, long, ti, me, ago, so, if I, can change, even, a little, bit…….”

I involuntarily ended up turning towards Jaim with my mouth hanging agape.

Is this ‘information contamination’?

Was it all changed because I had fought with Saeyeon, because

there was no way that we'd be able to become a harmonious family at this rate, because I had told her that I didn't need her, because I had told her that it was her fault? Her memories, her remembrances. Everything.

Jaim must have believed that, at the very least, Saeyeon and I got along while she was little. That Saeyeon and my relationship only got worse because of **that day on which we fought after she was born.**

But that wasn't the case. What she had witnessed was the sight of Saeyeon and I **shouting at each other and fighting before she had even been born.** The sight of me shouting that I had never seen Saeyeon as a woman and that I disliked her.

Since that was the case, there's no way that my relationship with Saeyeon would be good.

Her memories of her harmonious childhood were all a delusion.

The fact that she was born was proof that the two of us had a relationship, however, there's no way that we were living in harmony. We most likely fought constantly.

Adding to that, as I had shouted before, it was all her fault.

There's no way that her parents, who disliked her and thought it was her fault, would simply ignore her. They most likely harassed her. They most likely scared her. They most likely scolded her. If that happened, then, of course she would be afraid.

Our homeroom teacher was quietly listening to all of that.

“.....Haa.”

As if he didn't need to hear the rest, our homeroom teacher made Jaim stop by waving his hand before letting out a deep sigh.

“As I thought.”

“W-Wait, teacher. It’s not like that!”

“No. Saeyeon, I know what you’re trying to say. You did well up till now. It must have been hard looking after a little girl like this.”

As if he understood everything, our homeroom teacher patted Saeyeon’s shoulder.

“Teacher, what should we do? As I thought, should we contact the police?”

“That would be good. As you can tell, her mind seems a bit weird as well…….”

“Do you think it’s because of abuse or something?”

“If we contact the police, then shouldn’t they be able to identify her?”

“We should contact places like missing children shelters as well.”

“No, that’s not. Wait…….”

While ignoring Saeyeon’s words, our homeroom teacher was now focused on his conversation with the other teachers who had drawn closer to us before we knew it. What would be a good way to deal with the little girl who was saying weird things like being from the future, and among those methods, what would be optimal.

“Saeyeon, you did a good job.”

“Jaro, you did a good job as well. Honestly, I thought that you were a weird kid, but I guess you also have this kind of side to you.”

“You did well. Us teachers will handle it from here.”

“Yeah, good job. I see that even Jaro has this sort of side to his personality.”

While patting my shoulder, the teachers spoke as if they were proud

of us.

Even though I didn't do this to be praised. Even though I didn't do this with that intention in mind. Even though I wasn't trying to boast that 'I had this sort of side to me'.

"Wait a moment! I said that's not the case!"

I calmly spoke towards the teachers who weren't listening to the crying Saeyeon's words.

"Then I'll be leaving first."

"Jjaro!"

Although Saeyeon turned to look at me with pleading eyes, it didn't matter to me. If you want to do something, then do it with your own strength from now on.

The instant I turned my body, squeeze, as if she were afraid of what the teachers were discussing, Jaim held my hand. Albeit she soon became startled and let go. I cast away her hand without any lingering attachment and left the teachers' room by myself.

I didn't know why, but I was gritting my teeth audibly.



"Jjaro, do you have a minute?"

After school, Nanda called out to me and pointed behind him with his thumb. He's most likely telling me to come outside.

In the end, it was concluded that people would come to take Jaim

away tomorrow.

The teachers said that cases like this had to be dealt with quickly, so the conversation progressed as if they had already made preparations beforehand. Although it seems Saeyeon tried to persuade and stop the teachers however she could, it seems her efforts were wasted.

Saeyeon wordlessly turned to look at me each time that happened, but I ignored her.

I was sick and tired of this now.

“.....Is it something you have to tell me now?”

“A moment of your time is fine. It won’t take long.”

If he says so. I nodded my head.

The ‘Creative Science Club’ club room. My hideout.

Nanda locked the door behind him as he followed me into the room.

“Jjaro, take your glasses off for a bit.”

“.....All right.”

I knew what he was going to do. I took my glasses off.

I saw stars. This guy, he hit me seriously.

Nanda spoke while shaking his right hand.

“I honestly shouldn’t have done that since this is my mic hand.”

He then grinned and sat down on a chair.

“I told you yesterday, didn’t I? I told you to apologize to Saeyeon as soon as you got home. What are you thinking?”

The fact that he could smile coolly like that despite having hit me hard enough to see stars and the fact that I didn't feel particularly upset about it was most likely Nanda's charm.

"I'm not thinking of anything. It's exactly as you heard."

"Well, I didn't believe that she was really your daughter anyway, but."

As he said that, Nanda had a somewhat forlorn expression on his face.

".....Still, seeing the little lady who told me that she was my number one fan behave like that all of a sudden is, as I thought, painful."

"But it has nothing to do with you."

In response to my words that I had said while rubbing my stinging cheek, Nanda nodded his head.

"Yeah. It probably has nothing to do with me."

After saying that, Nanda looked straight at me.

"Then what about you, Jjaro?"

"....."

I missed my timing to respond. Nanda smiled.

"I don't know the circumstances and I don't really want to know either. Jjaro, your reason is your own reason after all. If you won't say it, then I don't plan to question you about it."

And I have no plans to tell him.

Nanda gave me an earnest look as he saw that I was staying quiet before continuing.

"But at the very least, I have to tell you this. Jjaro, you really

resemble someone right now. You know that, right?”

“.....I know.”

Among the untaught masses, the reason why Nanda and I are able to call each other ‘friends’, is because this guy knew my circumstances and understood it.

Last year, when we were in the same class, in response to when I had absentmindedly told him about my past, he displayed a forlorn smile and spoke these words, ‘That must have been difficult’.

I hated that. Even though he had a proper family, even though there’s no way that he would understand my situation, I absolutely hated it when he had patted my shoulder as if he understood.

That’s why I believed that if I was going to make friends, then it would only be this guy.

Because if it’s this guy, who’s capable of sympathizing with me because I’m able to live by myself, then I’d be able to spit in that smiling face of his one day.

When the time comes, I feel like the only way that my pitied self could feel better would be if I could see his face after he’s been betrayed by someone he trusts.

Regardless, while showing the same forlorn smile as before, Nanda spoke.

“I believe that someone else’s business is their own business, so I don’t plan to trespass into the safe zone that you had set up, Jjaro. However, since I’m your friend, I’ll tell you something from my position outside that zone.”

Nanda erased the pleasant smile from his face and looked straight, directly at me.

“There are times, when you have to know another person’s

situation. Especially if it's the situation of your **family**."

".....It's not a concern of mine. She's not even my family."

She's merely claiming to be my family. I have never perceived it as such.

Similar to how I have never sincerely perceived this guy as my friend.

"Is that so? Then I have nothing more to say."

Nanda let out a chuckle as he got up.

"It's your business, Jjaro, so I won't say anything more. If you're going to be like that, then so be it. I'm your friend and not your family after all."

"If you have something to say, then say it properly."

Nanda turned to look back at me as he opened the door.

"If you're incapable of understanding something if it isn't said properly, then you really are a child."

Nanda spoke as if he were gazing at an unfortunate friend.

"And if you don't try to listen, then you'll continue to be a child."

À À À

"Ja Saeyeon."

Because of the sight of me standing next to Saeyeon's seat and

speaking to her, our classmates turned their heads. As if they were staring at a bomb that was about to go off, they looked as if they would step forward at any moment in order to prevent it.

They were evidently raising their guards and whispering among one another. Don't tell me he's going to start something again? Shouldn't we stop him right now? etc etc.

“.....Yeah, Jjaro.”

Between the whispers, Saeyeon quietly answered.

“I'll be taking Jaim home.”

I wasn't doing this specifically because of what Nanda had said. I merely wanted to confirm something. That was all.

Of course, she most likely won't let me take Jaim. Saeyeon doesn't even know what happened yesterday. Additionally, I had said those words to her yesterday. That I disliked her, that I was sick and tired of her. I even clearly refused when she was asking for my help earlier.

“Okay.”

But Saeyeon smiled brightly and answered like that.

“.....Eh?”

“Then I'll go home by myself today. I'll try to handle dinner by myself as well.”

Saeyeon displayed a confident look on her face as if she were telling me to not worry.

Why.

Although I couldn't muster the strength to say what was on my mind, Saeyeon must have read my expression in some way as she continued to smile.

“If Jjaro is saying that, then that means he’ll definitely do something.”

Among all of the things that Saeyeon does, this was what I hated the most.

She holds expectations on her own and gets disappointed on her own.

Regardless, right now wasn’t the time to get upset about that.

I didn’t say anything more and left to pick up Jaim, who was being looked after by the school nurse, a nurse who was closer to being a grandma, at the infirmary.

“Take special care of that girl. It seems she has a lot of injuries in her heart.”

I couldn’t say anything in return to what the school nurse had said as I left.

“.....”

Moreover, as I had expected, Jaim didn’t respond at all throughout the entire day.

No, it would be better to say that she was constantly trembling in the corner of the room.

Even after a considerable amount of time had passed since we got home, like an injured animal, like a scared cat, Jaim stayed in the corner with her back against the wall and kept watching me with fearful eyes that were dark and filled to the brim with anxiety.

She was unable to bite her nails because of the bandages that were wrapped around her hand, so I had to stop her several times since she would try to bite the bandages off. Every time I did, she would flinch and repeatedly say ‘I’m sorry’ once more.

She didn't eat either. Even though I filled the plates with her favorite foods, she wouldn't even take a glimpse at them. I did hear her stomach grumble, but it appeared as if she suspected that the food I made her was filled with poison.

She should be tired since she wasn't able to sleep at all since yesterday, but it seems she was afraid that I might do something to her while she's asleep.

“.....Kid.”

Time went by like that and the day had ended before I knew it. It was now today. Once morning arrives, I was going to have to say farewell to this kid.

Upperclassman Nabom had told me. She told me that she was going to have to go through some hardships because I had brought Jaim to school. I wonder what she meant by that. Did she mean that she has to now kidnap Jaim while she's on her way to a child shelter or whatever in order to take her back to the future?

Or did she mean that she has to go through some hardships because she won't be able to take her away now?

“.....Kid.”

Dark trembling eyes that made it clear that she had her guard up.

“Come here. Let's talk for a bit. Okay?”

I wonder what this kid is thinking.

Is she relieved that she no longer has to face a scary person like me once morning arrives? What thoughts are going back and forth within those dark eyes?

“If you don't come here, then I'll come to you, you know?”

“.....Uu.”

Twitch, Jaim pushed her body against the wall even more.

She was even eyeing the door behind me so she could avoid and get away from me if she had to.

Yeah, that's right. Of course. Anyone would want to run away from something that scares them. Especially if it's from the person who told her that she wasn't needed and never wanted her. There's no way that she would want to go near that person.

"All right. Then listen to me from there."

No answer. She only looked at me with scared eyes and moved her head in a vague manner that made it so that I couldn't tell if she were nodding or shaking her head.

There's a chance that she was simply trembling.

Regardless, and in spite of that.

"You know, I thought that I didn't need something like a family."

Since this is the end anyway.

If it's someone who I'm not sure was listening to me or not,
if it's someone who won't understand unless told properly,
then I'll most likely be able to actually talk with ease.

I hate families.

Since they make you have false hope.

Since they make you work hard for nothing.

When I was young, I believed that I could change something if I worked hard.

If I helped my parents, if I did whatever I could, then I believed that it would work out somehow. Since we're a family. Since we're a precious existence that you only have one of. If there's a difficult task, then we help each other. Since we're an existence that shares each other's happiness and pain. Since we're an existence that everyone obviously has, and if they don't, then it'd be painful.

Ever since she was little, Saeyeon has always been a dope.

If someone didn't help her, then she really couldn't do anything.

Every time I saw Saeyeon like that, it was pitiful.

During pre-school, there was a time when she had tried to eat mud while we were playing house. I hit her on the back of her head in order to stop her and went to fight with the kids who had made her do that.

During elementary school, there was a time when she had brought a doll, which she had cherished since she was a baby, to school, and ended up being teased for it and someone even threw her doll away. I comforted Saeyeon so she wouldn't cry and, after picking the doll up from the river, I went after the guys who did it and beat them up.

Because Saeyeon was scolded by the teacher for being unable to properly learn Korean literature and simple mathematics, I had tutored her throughout the night at a young age. When she was crying because she had broken a window during cleaning time, I told the teacher that I had done it and got in trouble in her stead. There was a time she said she was going to copy me since I cooked for my parents and wound up almost starting a fire, so I ended up helping her.

And, every time I saw Saeyeon like that, I was jealous.

Because Saeyeon had a family that looked after her.

Because she had parents that would smile and comfort her whenever she went to them crying. I envied that.

I was jealous of the laughter I would hear next door whenever I was eating dinner by myself.

Whenever I went to visit Saeyeon, who had a weak constitution since she was little and would often fall sick, while she was ill, I would be jealous of the fact that her parents would take a day off from work and take care of her all day.

That's why I felt miserable whenever Saeyeon approached me.

I was annoyed because of Saeyeon who would always stick close to me.

Why me? Even though she has a family. Even though she already has people who would comfort her and take care of her without something like me around, why me?

I would get irritated whenever I heard Saeyeon's parents or any other adult say that we got along. Even though I'm not taking care of her because I want to. Even though I'm simply taking care of her because she felt like too much of a child.

Regardless, no one understood. Everyone thought that I was taking care of her because I liked her.

Saeyeon's mother had a weak constitution like Saeyeon. When I was young, I thought that that was the reason why Saeyeon's body was weak.

In the end, she had fallen sick due to a bad illness and passed away around the same time Saeyeon was about to start elementary school.

She was a good person. She would worry about me who was home alone often. She would occasionally invite me over to have dinner with them and she would even suggest that I should stay over for the night.

She would always tease me by calling me ‘Jjarō’.

During my last meeting with her, Saeyeon’s mother had said this to me,

“Since this old lady can no longer look after Saeyeon, I’ll leave her in your care, Jjarō.”

She smiled as if it were regrettable and stroked my hair.

“Saeyeon is kind, innocent, and dopey……. Someone has to constantly be by her side, but it seems that’s going to be impossible for this old lady.”

So please stay beside Saeyeon in this old lady’s stead, Jjarō.

“I’m only asking you this because you’re like our son, Jjarō.”

Because she couldn’t do it herself. She arbitrarily expected me to do it.

Even while in front of death’s door, she asked me to carry out a lifelong request.

I envied that so much.

Even Saeyeon’s new mother, her current mother, who Saeyeon’s father had married several years later, was like that.

“Since it’s Jjarō, who’s like our son, we’ll help you if you look after Saeyeon.”

She spoke as if she were coercing me once more with an unheard of promise.

I begrudged that so much.

That’s why, I hated families even more.

Because I wasn’t able to have one.

If I could choose, then I wanted to be born in a family like that as well.

Not a household that would ignore me as if I didn't exist, no, as if I were a nuisance, but a family that would embrace me warmly.

I wished that I had parents who would say that for me.

But something like that didn't exist. I didn't have it.

An existence that everyone obviously has and would be painful if you didn't, this was a lie.

If you don't have a family, then you could live using your own strength just as I have.

An existence that helps each other if there's a difficult task and shares each other's happiness and struggles, this was a lie.

Because I have dealt with difficult tasks by myself. Because I have enjoyed happy occasions and overcome struggles all by myself.

The fact that it was a precious existence that you only had one of, this was also a lie.

Since I didn't even have one.

So, I don't need, a family.

"But, but I don't get it!"

Because I had shouted unconsciously, Jaim reacted by flinching. But I had no time to pay attention to that.

"Even though I don't need it, even though it's a lie! Even though it's an existence that'll be tossed aside when you no longer need it! Even though it doesn't matter if you have one or not since it's the same thing anyway!"

At first, when this kid, Jaim appeared before me and called herself my daughter, I simply thought that she was bothersome. I was already busy with my own stuff, so I didn't have the time to deal with her.

I tried to not pay attention to her. Family? How stupid. You don't need something like that. You just have to live by yourself.

However, as we continued to spend our time together, I gradually became concerned.

What is she doing by herself at home?

What exactly is so good about this place that she would come here?

Do I have to ignore her? Or do I have to respond to her somehow?

Even though this kid came here with a goal anyway. Even though she had come here in order to use me so I would unite or whatever with Saeyeon. Even though that was it.

Even though she was trying to use me for her own gain.

Why am I concerned?

Even though, according to this generation's genius scientist, Jin Jaro's, my, theory, families aren't necessary. Even though not having a family is the premise and the conclusion. I couldn't understand. I don't know. I don't understand why I'm worried, why I'm concerned.

Additionally, the one thing I didn't understand the most was, how exactly is this kid,

despite having had the same past as me, despite the fact that she should have sufficiently learned that she didn't need something like a family, how.

How is she still able to have hope?

Does she still possess the hope that she'll be able to change

something if she works hard enough?

“Even though it’s impossible for me to not know something! Even now!”

I’m perfect. I’m capable of living on my own. I’m a genius. There’s nothing that I don’t know. I like science because the answer comes out right away. Only a single answer resides within a single question. Furthermore, if we use the principle of science and follow the procedure of problem posing, observation, experimentation, and result, then in order to find out the answer to the question of whether families are needed or not, you just have to look at my, the perfect genius’, experience to know that families aren’t needed.

I can do the experiment whenever I want, but the result is already out.

There is only a single answer. There should only be one. It can’t not be one.

But, but why am I still unable to get it?

There’s no way that something the great I doesn’t understand could exist.

Why, does this kid still have hope?

Why, am I jealous of families?

Why, am I so annoyed right now?

At myself.

“I-I’m……sorry…….”

“……Hm?”

I raised my head in response to those words.

Because Jaim, was speaking to me.

She was apologizing.

Jaim's voice was different from before. Although it still sounded as if she were holding back her sobbing, her tone was now boundlessly dark and cold.

"What's wrong? What are you sorry about?"

I quickly asked back. That's not what's important right now. Jaim, had finally reacted to my presence here. I was happy about that.

——That's why, you 'reacting' to me properly is enough to make me happy, Dad.

I finally understood what Jaim meant when she had said that at that time.

But it wasn't just that. That wasn't the only thing I wanted to know.

I had to get an answer. What is it that I don't get.

I was able to slightly open the door of her closed mind. I had to open it all the way no matter what. What's hidden inside that closed mind and what I'm going to do after I open it, is a problem for later.

No matter what she did wrong, regardless of what it was, I'll forgive her.

I asked her while smiling. The edges of my mouth shook.

"Because you made that plastic model without my permission? That's fine. It would have been knocked over by time anyway, so who knows when I would have made it myself, and I could just buy another one later."

"Because you called me an idiot? That's fine. That's an easy misunderstanding to have. Geniuses occasionally do stupid things as well after all."

“Or because you abruptly traveled through time in order to be here? That’s fine. Everything is fine, all of that is okay, so tell me. What did you do wrong?”

In the end, Jaim started to shed tears as she spoke.

And in that instant, the smile that I was forcefully making on my face hardened. I felt like all of the blood in my body was rushing through my blood vessels in reverse.

“I’m, sorry……. It would, **have been better if I weren’t born…….** Then, mom, and dad, wouldn’t have had, to fight……. I’m sorry……. I’m sorry……. **I’m sorry, for being born…….** I’m sorry…….”

“……You!”

I couldn’t hold back. I jumped up and walked towards Jaim. Jaim, who had been wiping her tears and continuously saying that she was sorry, was startled, but she must have been terrified of the expression on my face as she was unable to even run away.

I raised my hand. Jaim bit her lips tightly as she held her eyes shut.

While barely holding back my shaking arm, I shouted.

“Never, never say that you’re sorry for being born!”

Those words,

because those words were what I wanted to say to my parents.

Because that was what I wanted to say to my parents who wouldn’t take care of me, to tell them to take care of me, to please take care of me at least once.

Because those words were the very words I couldn't say because of that, the words I couldn't allow myself to say.

Because, out of all the things I could have seen, I had seen the one thing I didn't want to see the most within her mind, I ended up seeing myself.

“H-Hiik!”

Jaim crawled on the floor because of my shout. With her hands and feet, she crawled away like a cat and opened the door before running out of the room.

I heard tumbling. She must have tripped because she was in such a hurry. She didn't dare to open the front door, so she had run to the empty room that was the furthest away. I heard the door to my parent's room being opened and closed before it was then locked. Starting from a whimper, I then soon heard crying.

“.....I see, so this is how it feels. When you hear those words.”

I could only laugh. I inadvertently laughed without a sound.

I didn't say those words because I was afraid. I couldn't.

During my birthday during my second year of middle school, I wanted to spit those words out in response to what my parents had told me over the phone.

But I was afraid.

In response to my words,

‘Yeah, it would have been better if you weren't born.’

‘It would have been better if we didn't have something like you.’

‘Then I would have been able to work faster.’

‘Then I would have been able to focus on my work.’

I was afraid, that I would hear these sorts of responses.

Because, that answer would mean that I had no value whatsoever.

I didn’t want that. Thus, I would tell myself this.

I’m a genius. I’m an existence that’s necessary to the world.

I’m not a needless existence.

If I didn’t tell myself this, if I didn’t endure everything on my own, then I wouldn’t have been able to survive.

And yet I had said those words to Jaim.

You’re something that I have never wanted even once in my life.

You’re a needless existence.

You’re an existence that’s worthless and better off gone.

“.....Hm?”

Jaim’s backpack that was sitting in the corner of the room came into my line of sight.

An inefficiently small and adorable bag.

Now that I think about it, every time we worked together at night, she would leave that there.

Moreover, the instant I saw that backpack, I remembered something.

I pulled the zipper open and poured the contents of the backpack onto the ground.

A notebook that you could feel the unique childishness of a little kid

just by looking at the cover.

⟨Happy Family Planning⟩

I flipped the first page and flipped the page after that.

There were lines written here and there. Scribbles that were drawn in a childish manner. I flipped through the notebook one page at a time.

While engraving in my eyes the lines that seemed similar to wishes.

‘Watch TV as a family.’

‘Eat dinner as a family.’

‘Cook for mom and dad.’

‘Take a bath together as a family.’

‘Go on a family outing.’

“.....How childish.”

While I let out a snort and laughed, the pages became wet.

In the end, we’re merely the same human.

If you look at my belief that something like a family wasn’t necessary from another angle,

then it meant that I was just jealous.

Even these trivial things that were normally done routinely,
was something that I envied immensely.

But since I couldn't grasp it within my hands, because I couldn't have it,

I had turned my head away and disregarded them saying that those grapes were sour.

I finally obtained the answer of why I was so annoyed.

Because it was Jaim's **first family**.

Because she had obtained the family that she had always wanted.

Because it was the family that I had hated until now and said that it was unnecessary.

Moreover, as if it were being reflected in a mirror, it was a family that was just like me.

Something I didn't want to watch the most, something that had a part that I didn't want to acknowledge.

I've come to a realization. I'm not a genius.

I didn't discover the truth of the world nor do I know something that's capable of treating others as untaught masses. I'm not an existence that's absolutely necessary to the world either.

Those are merely things that I wanted to hear from **someone that's not myself**.

That you're needed. That you're precious.

I didn't know anything. Really, I knew nothing.

“.....All right.”

But that was a mistake.

I couldn't accept this answer.

“Things are blackening(The Final Mode).”

À À À

In the morning. Upperclassman Nabom, who had come outside after being contacted by me, looked more tired than usual. Her eyes weren't half-open but a quarter-open right now.

“.....What is it, Underclassman Jin Jaro? During this early morning.”

I spoke bluntly towards Upperclassman Nabom who was looking at her watch and talking in an evidently annoyed tone.

“I forgot about one thing.”

“What is it? I'm tired beyond belief because you had complicated matters immensely yesterday, Underclassman Jin Jaro.”

So this person becomes like this if she's tired. If her normal behavior was to act courteous, then right now, she sounded sincerely annoyed. Without even covering her mouth, Upperclassman Nabom let out a big yawn and rubbed her eyes.

“Seriously, I definitely told you to coordinate your story properly, but till the very end, you wound up dealing with things like that. My head hurts for several different reasons thanks to you. I have to deal with the government authority here and the timing to take the kid back to the future has now become vague.”

“That doesn’t concern me.”

“.....You talk well despite being the very person who made me go through all of this hardship in the first place.”

Wow, that’s a bit scary. Her murderous intent right now wasn’t a joke because her eyes were only a quarter-open. Nevertheless, I spoke imposingly.

“Upperclassman Nabom, you definitely promised me before, right? That if I guide you through modern society, then ‘you’d give me something that I’d need in the future’.”

“Do you mean the DLC content.....? You’re really amazing, Underclassman Jin Jaro.”

Upperclassman Nabom looked annoyed.

“You’re aiming for your own personal gain even in this situation, huh..... Well, sure, you always have. All right. I’ll give you something, then. However, it won’t be a time machine or something from the future, but.....”

“No. I’ll pick what I want.”

Because of my stern answer, Upperclassman Nabom’s eyes opened a bit wider. They were now half-open.

“.....Well, okay then. This is the end anyway, and since I was able to finish my task within a month thanks to you, I can offer you a certain amount of service. Although I do have some resentment since you made me go through a lot of trouble throughout the entire night and called me here even though the sun isn’t up yet, a promise is a promise.”

After letting out a long sigh, Upperclassman Nabom asked.

“So, what is it that you want? Should I tell you the superordinate concepts of the cell phones that’ll be all the rage in the future? If

you'll be satisfied with that, then.....”

“I don't need something like that.”

I looked straight at Upperclassman Nabom, who was going through her pockets, and told her what I needed the most in my future.

“———Give me my daughter.”

“.....Are you going make bad jokes even in a situation like this? I did say before that the only thing I could offer you was my body, but.....”

“I'm not talking about that! Read the context, the context!”

Damn it, she's going to release the valve because of that nonsense. Now that I think about it, there's no reason to speak formally to her now. She's someone who's trying to take my daughter away. She's an enemy, “I want Jaim. Help me.”

And if need be, you have to ally with your enemy. I'm the genius scientist of this age, a mad scientist, so I'm not as narrow-minded as those foolish untaught masses.

Upperclassman Nabom blinked. She must have been bewildered since I had abruptly spoken to her informally and she couldn't understand what my intentions were.

“.....Why, did you change your mind all of a sudden?”

While gazing at Upperclassman Nabom who had asked that while tilting her head, I answered.

“Yesterday, Jaim had said this to me. She said that she was sorry for having been born, that she was sorry for being here.”

“.....So?”

I unconsciously clenched my fists. I had no other choice but to grit my teeth as hard as I possibly could in order to calm my trembling

jaw.

“At the very least, those words are the very words that a child should never say to their parents. Parents must never hear those words from their child. If, if by the slightest chance, they hear those words……. If they make their child think that…….”

As if I were struggling to spit a black lump out from my chest, I was barely able to force my mouth to continue.

“Then that child, and those parents, are the worst. They’re pieces of garbage.”

Upperclassman Nabom simply looked at me with wide eyes.

“If you’re from the future, then you can do something like information fabrication, right? In the first place, you should have had to make a family register or something in order to admit yourself to our school. If that’s the case, then can’t you make something like a family register for Jaim as well?”

“……Well, of course it’s possible, but.”

Upperclassman Nabom snorted at my words and spoke.

“Why should I help you?”

With a mocking smile on her face, Upperclassman Nabom looked at me as if I were pathetic.

“A promise like that that doesn’t have any compulsion, it’s over if I just ignore it. Even if I could offer you a certain amount of service out of my own goodwill, there’s no reason for me to help you while enduring losses.”

While smiling with only her mouth, Upperclassman Nabom gave me a cold gaze.

“All of my goals have been achieved just as I wanted, which means

I don't have to stay in this sort of past any longer. If I help you, Underclassman Jin Jaro, and hand Miss Jin Jaim over to you, then I would have to continue my bothersome mission here. What reason do I have to endure that inconvenience?"

That's right. I knew she would react like this.

Since everything has proceeded as she wanted.

A gamble against a person who had obtained everything she wanted. I had no card that I could put out. I had no weapons that I could currently use.

"I don't care about something like that."

If that's the case, if I don't have **a weapon that I can use now.**

"But if you're like that, then it'll become really bothersome for you, you know? **In the future, that is.**"

".....What do you mean?"

Upperclassman Nabom knit her brows in response to my words and asked back.

"By the looks of it, it seems **information contamination** has occurred on my side as well. I've only said it through words so far, but at this point, I feel like I have no other choice but to take action. **World domination.**"

".....Pardon?"

Upperclassman Nabom opened her eyes widely at the words I had spat out. And then,

"Ha..... Hahaha. Ahahahahahahahaha!"

she held her sides with laughter. She laughed so hard that tears formed at the corner of her eyes.

“Aah, that was a good joke. For you to make me laugh in a situation like this, you may actually have a knack for being a comedian, Underclassman Jin Jaro.”

Upperclassman Nabom wiped away her tear and displayed her teeth as she smirked.

“Underclassman Jin Jaro, I’m not sure if the dumb Underclassman Jin Jaro remembers or not, but a threat like that doesn’t work. I told you before, didn’t I? There isn’t something like a time paradox. In the future, Underclassman Jin Jaro, you’re merely a bald old man who gets fired from his job. A worthless and small cogwheel that the world can continue to spin without. Do you think that kind of threat will work on me when I know that already?”

Upperclassman Nabom folded her arms as if she were waiting for my reply.

“What’s your plan to conquer the world? Your ways and means? Can you assure me that it’s possible? A bluff that’s simply words, you should throw this sort of nonsense aside.”

“Then I’d like to ask you as well.”

I pushed my glasses up and spoke.

“Where’s the **evidence that it’s impossible?**”

Upperclassman Nabom’s face slightly hardened because of my question.

“You saw the future? You already know? Where’s the proof? The assurance? Isn’t that just your memory? My plan, ways, and means, you said that you wanted to hear them, right? All right, then I’ll tell you.”

I stuck out my chest, took in a deep breath, and,

I shouted in a voice that was filled with certainty.

“I! The real man Jin Jaro! The genius scientist of this age! Mad scientist! Was able to prove my hypothesis that families aren’t needed through this incident! Therefore, with certainty, I had obtained the evidence that it would be fine to act in order to enlighten the untaught masses of the entire world!”

I’m not a genius? I’m a worthless and small cogwheel that the world can still spin without?

Don’t make me laugh. Something like that is obviously wrong.

I’m a necessary existence to the world. I’m someone who can change the world.

“I have already progressed in my development of robot maids for the purpose of conquering the world! If you put this genius’ ability into consideration, then I’ll be able to mass produce them within 5 years. If I utilize that technological prowess, then I’ll be able to make something like a combat android in an instant!”

I can create an enemy searching device by improving the ‘Coloring Radar’ which I had invented, I can create a weapon by improving the ‘Acht-Acht Antiaircraft gun’ which I had invented, and I can create a power source by improving the ‘Atomic Heater’ which I had invented!

“My tools are already completed! Furthermore, with the money that I could obtain by releasing a futuristic game console to the market first, I could prepare everything now!”

All of my preparations are finished. The only thing left for me to do is to act on it.

“Untaught masses who are bound by an outdated system like families will bow before my technical skills, and the era that you had come from, Ha Nabom, will be ruled by that technological prowess of mine!”

The instant I pointed at her, Upperclassman Nabom flinched.

However, that was also only for a moment. A ridiculing smile appeared on her face once more.

“.....Even if you say that, in the end, that’s still just empty words.”

Yeah, in the long run, I was simply saying things.

Words that I was spitting out without any assurance.

“I’m someone who always keeps his words. You know that as well, don’t you?”

However, I resolved myself. I erased my doubt. I held onto only confidence.

“Furthermore, I already know. The fact that information contamination can easily occur even by just saying a single line. If that’s the case, doesn’t that mean there’s no assurance that you won’t be contaminated **by something I say?**”

The mocking smile disappeared from Upperclassman Nabom’s face, and before I knew it, she was looking at me with blank eyes while her mouth was slightly agape.

Back when she had explained to me what information contamination was, I had asked her.

———First, is Upperclassman Nabom fine?

In response to that question, she had answered me like this.

———I’m fine. As I’m a dispatched officer, I’ve received training in order to be prepared for it.

The fact that she had received training, meant that she couldn’t block it perfectly

It was a gamble anyway. I didn’t have any assurance whatsoever.

I simply believed. I believed that I’m not some pathetic person in

the future. That I'm a great person. That I'm a necessary person who possesses the strength to change the world.

I'm a terrible person anyway. I was a bastard who bossed around a girl who was taking care of him, told the girl who said she liked him that he disliked people like her, told his daughter that he didn't need something like her, and was a mad scientist who dreamt of conquering the world, so there's no way that I, that bastard, would be a good person.

If that's the case, then I'd definitely become a terrible person. Instead of getting jealous of something that I couldn't grasp within my hands, I'd get over it by breaking it apart.

"If you take that kid away, then I swear that I will carry this plan out! A world that disregards me and considers me to be a needless existence, I'll destroy it all! I'll get rid of it all!"

In response to those words, a dark glint brushed by Upperclassman Nabom's eyes.

Fear then gradually spread across her face.

I'll do it. I'll accomplish it no matter what.

Honestly, I don't want to do something like conquering the world. If anything, I want to destroy it. Something like a world that doesn't need me, something like a world that says I'm worthless, it'd be better off gone.

".....You're saying that so indifferently. I thought that you were just all talk when you kept calling yourself a mad scientist, but you actually seem like one a bit right now."

Upperclassman Nabom said that while trying to act strong, but a cold sweat was already going down the back of her neck and she had gulped.

"But how exactly is that a reason for me to help you?"

“Hu, hu, hu, how foolish. As expected of an untaught individual who doesn’t know science.”

I shook my finger side to side.

“Listen carefully. Science consists of 4 steps. Problem posing, observation, experimentation, and conclusion. You should know at least this much, right?”

“.....Although I’m uncertain if that defines science, what about it?”

“I have been doing something wrong until now. Well, though it’s because I have a tolerant attitude of not concerning myself with trivial matters since I’m a genius and all.”

I made a bold declaration.

“I forgot the experimentation, the experiment! That’s right! This is an experiment! An experiment for the development of all of mankind! Whether families are needed or not, I’m saying that I will personally do the experiment by spending time together with my daughter!”

“.....Wow. You’re so boldly declaring that you’ll use your daughter as a test subject.”

Upperclassman Nabom contorted her face as if she were sincerely perturbed.

“I am a mad scientist, I’ve already transcended something like the laws of the untaught masses. I’m saying that I’ll sacrifice myself for science!”

That’s right. Ultimately, every type of apprehension must be carried out personally and overcome.

Even if you’re a genius, something you don’t know is something you don’t know. That isn’t something you should be ashamed of.

A true genius doesn’t give up when faced with something they

aren't knowledgeable of, they endeavor in order to figure it out.

"Now then, Ha Nabom,

choose! Will you momentarily stop my rampage until I'm able to figure out whether families are needed or not by presenting my daughter to me, or will you return to the future and live in an era that has turned to ashes!?"

Upperclassman Nabom's lips vacantly opened halfway in response to my shout.

As if she were imagining it, as if she were truly worried that something like that would happen.

A dark glint glimmered in Upperclassman Nabom's eyes for a moment because of those words.

Fear, spread gradually.

"....."

The moment her trembling lips were about to say something.

".....Haa. I guess it can't be helped then."

At last, Upperclassman Nabom let out a sigh as she raised both of her hands.

"Fine. Let's say I lost this time."

Upperclassman Nabom continued as she lowered her raised hands.

"I'm telling you this now, but the only reason I'm raising a white flag right now is so I can prevent even the slightest chance of information contamination from occurring since it must not happen to me. That is all. In any case, no matter how much you endeavor, Underclassman Jin Jaro, in the end, you'll wind up breaking up with Underclassman Ja Saeyeon, and your relationship with Miss Jin Jaim will become like that as well. Now that Miss Jin Jaim and I are here,

the future has already been determined.”

There wasn’t even a spec of doubt in Upperclassman Nabom’s eyes as she said that.

“If you have any regrets later on, then know that this was your choice, Underclassman Jin Jaro.”

I answered Upperclassman Nabom who had said that to me while looking straight at my face.

“If that happens, then all I have to do is achieve my ambition.”

I had nothing to lose either way.

Upperclassman Nabom let out another sigh because of my answer.

“At any rate, there’s something I want to ask you.”

“What?”

Upperclassman Nabom looked right at me and asked.

“Didn’t you say that you’re no parent, Underclassman Jin Jaro?”

“What about it?”

I gazed at Upperclassman Nabom and grinned.

“I can’t be helped, can it? The peace of the family is——.”



It would have been nice if everything wrapped up like that, but I still had one more thing left to handle.

“Haa……. Haa…….”

——Listen carefully, Underclassman Jin Jaro.

“Get out of the way, you untaught masses! Don’t block my way!”

——Since a promise is a promise, I can at least do that much, but I’m still a civil servant. I have to be faithful to my duties. If I don’t, then I’ll end up getting fired just like you did in the future,
Underclassman Jin Jaro.

“Hey, you uneducated person over there! Lower your body! Yeah, lower your head! Hiyaah!”

——As long as Miss Jaim’s information contamination is severe, I cannot allow her to stay in this era. I have the task of taking Miss Jaim back to the future as long as she continues to be in this state.

“Haa……. Haa……. I said to get out of the way!”

——Information contamination cannot be treated in the future, but a single method to fix it does exist. You know what that is without me telling you, right?

I know.

Jaro, is off!

“Whoa, aaah! Punk, watch where you’re going! You want me to fix your eyes for you?!”

……Jaro, is rolling.

I stood back up and ran down my morning path to school, but in reverse. I was heading home.

The students I passed by were looking at me as if I were some crazy person as I pushed and jumped over people who were blocking my path. But in the end, I wound up tripping over my own feet and rolling on the ground. What are you looking at?

Our homeroom teacher had told me yesterday, and he had informed Saeyeon as well. He said that he and some people were going to come to the front our houses in the morning in order to pick Jaim up. Regardless, Saeyeon is also an affectionate person, so she'll most likely try to keep Jaim there.

If it was the Saeyeon I knew, then that would be the case.

And I was hoping that it was the Saeyeon I knew.

Then I won't be too late.

"So, what are you going to do?"

In response to my answer, Upperclassman Nabom sighed deeply and spoke as she looked at the clock.

"I'm capable of helping you, but aren't they taking Miss Jaim away today?"

"Yeah. They're coming in the morning today."

"Do you know what time it is right now?"

"I know. What of it?"

Coolly, I gazed at Upperclassman with a tilted glance that befitted this age's cold-hearted, genius city-dwelling scientist.

"Use your time machine or something. I don't care about the ways and means. If you can't do it, then do something that'll at least buy us a couple of more days. In order to take Jaim back to the future, you were going to go against the government authorities anyway, weren't you?"

That was 2 hours ago.

There was no time machine. Upperclassman Nabom cracked her knuckles, stretched her neck, and took out her terminal before she started to type away like mad. Her typing was so fast that it almost

felt like the reason why she would always go around looking tired was because she was reserving her strength for moments like this.

Though it still ended up taking this much time.

“If my higher ups find out about this, then it won’t end with just one or two written apologies…….”

She could have been faster if she worked instead of complaining.

I could have been faster if I exercised regularly.

But it was fine. It was still better than being more late than this.

“W-Wait a moment! Jjaro will be here soon, so……!”

“We’re already plenty late. Saeyeon, you have to go to school as well. I get that you must have gotten attached to the little girl because of the past couple of weeks, but for the little girl’s sake…….”

“Haa……. Haa……. S-Safe…….”

I was, at the very least, able to get here on time.

“……Jjaro?”

Saeyeon looked at me with wide eyes. Because of that, the other people around her looked at me as well.

There was a car that looked like it belong to some children shelter, which our homeroom teacher and Saeyeon were arguing in front of, and besides that, there was a police officer and some other people, who must have come from a children protection group, standing on the side and watching Saeyeon and our teacher with worried eyes. It seems I had arrived just barely on time.

“Where’d you go off to? We’ve been waiting for you.”

Our gorilla-like homeroom teacher glanced at me. I was going to answer immediately, but it took me a moment because I had to catch

my breath. Maybe I should actually start exercising.

“Jaim, where’s, haa, Jaim?”

“.....She’s over there.”

In the place he had pointed at in a tired manner, there was a terrified Jaim who was trying to conceal herself.

“Come here.”

“.....Uu.....”

I sternly walked towards Jaim who was backing away in order to avoid me and grabbed her hand. Jaim’s pupils trembled. Did she get caught on purpose even though she could have run away, or.....?

No, that didn’t matter. That’s not something I need to be concerned about at this point.

“Uhm, who’s this.....?”

In response to the words spoken by the lady who seemed to be the oldest among the caretakers, our homeroom teacher answered while scratching his head.

“Uh, mm, he’s the other student who was taking care of this little girl. Jin Jaro, stop wasting time and let the kid go. We have to go now.”

“No. I won’t let her go.”

Our homeroom teacher simply raised one eyebrow because of my firm answer.

“.....Haa. I knew this would happen so I wanted to send the little girl yesterday.”

Because the police officer and the caretakers were looking at him with troubled looks on their faces, our homeroom teacher scratched

the back of his head again and spoke. Your hair will fall out if you keep that up.

“Jaro, I get that you got attached to the kid as you took care of her as well, but still, if you act like this, then you’ll just be troubling everyone here. Saeyeon is……. Well, she’s Saeyeon, but you’re supposed to know your stuff, how could you also behave like this?”

“That isn’t my problem.”

“Jin Jaro. I’m not joking around.”

It seems our homeroom teacher, who had been talking gently until now, didn’t like my answer as his tone then became sharp.

“You young kids won’t be able to keep her around anyway, and it won’t be good for the little girl either. I’m not sure where this little girl came from, but it’s apparent that she needs love and protection, so wouldn’t it be better to leave her in the hands of people who are more appropriate? We already concluded that we were going to do this yesterday.”

That’s right. That might be true. Instead of a person like me, someone who was trained to handle things like this might be better.

“Jaro, I don’t know if you’re acting like this because this girl is, in some ways, similar to you, but that’s just your greed. If you really want to help the girl, then shouldn’t you consider what might be the best option for her? You can’t look after a kid simply with your sympathy and vicarious satisfaction, right?”

That’s right. It was just as he said. It’s not like I can look after this kid simply because of my sympathy or because she was like me. I have to think about what’s best for this kid.

“That’s why I’m doing this.”

I boldly stared at our homeroom teacher and spoke.

“Because what this kid needs the most, is parents.”

“You…….”

Instead of our homeroom teacher, who was at a loss for words, a caretaker stood forward with a pleasant smile on her face.

“Uhm, boy? I understand what you’re concerned about. You’re most likely worried whether this child will be able to grow up while properly receiving love or not. We have many children like this at our shelter. There are also a lot of experienced caretakers there. We’ll take care of her much better than the parents who had thrown her away. Yes, if you want, then you can come visit whenever you want. We’ll always welcome you with open arms, so can you stop this and…….”

“That’s why I’m saying she doesn’t need something like that.”

“Jin Jaro! Are you going to keep making things complicated?!”

In the end, our homeroom teacher couldn’t hold back any longer and proceeded to shout.

“At any rate, everything has already been decided, so nothing will change even if you behave like this now! So stop messing around and let the little girl go. Do you know that this is an official government duty? Why do you think that police officer is over there?”

Although the police officer looked annoyed at our homeroom teacher for bringing him up all of a sudden, it seems he didn’t like tiresome things so he nodded his head with a hardened face and looked at me.

Of course that would be the case. The procedures were all over and government authorities were scary.

Also, the fundamentals of a mad scientist is to fight against government authorities.

Try coming at me. This is only the beginning.

Excluding Saeyeon, who was looking at me, I turned to yell at the other 7 people (The Round Table).

“Shut up! I know that better than anyone else!”

Because of my yell that didn’t have even a hint of formality in it, our homeroom teacher, the caretakers, and even the police officer shut their mouths. But this wasn’t the time to care about that.

These people have been scratching away at my nerves for a while now.

“Even I know what’s good for this kid! Yeah! There probably isn’t a single good thing about staying with me! I don’t want to stay with this kid either! Rather than being with a parent who doesn’t even pay attention to her, it would probably be better if she were with people who could love her properly!”

Because of my shout, Jaim, whose hand was held in mine, looked up at me with scared eyes. What? I’m not going to lie. I’m only saying my thoughts.

“Honestly, it’s bothersome! I don’t need something like a family and I don’t intend to care about it! I don’t care about what happens to them!”

But, despite that,

“Even if it’s a parent who’s better off gone, even if it’s a parent who doesn’t do anything for her, even if it’s a parent who won’t properly love and take care of her and would only cause her harm instead!”

——Families are something precious! You only have a single family!

If this kid, doesn’t believe I’m like that,

——You get upset if I mess around with you, you pull on my cheeks, we worked on Multi together, and you even worried about me

for sleeping late. That's more than enough for me. I'm glad I came here.

If she'll smile like that,

"It can't be helped!"

Although I honestly don't want to do this——.

Since this is my first time having a family——.

"T-This kid is my daughter, so I'll be the one to raise her!"

.....Damn it. I bit my tongue. What do you want? I'm nervous.

".....What?"

Our homeroom teacher's mouth fell open. He really does look like a gorilla when he's like that.

".....Jaro, what are you saying?"

"Look here!"

I spread the sweat-soaked and crinkled piece of paper that I had been holding in my hand since earlier. Our homeroom teacher received it.

"I-In truth, this child is my half-sibling that my reckless parents had given birth to! So obviously they would play dumb if you contact them in order to ask about her! Regardless, I couldn't bear the misconduct of those parents of mine, so I decided to protect her like this! Of course, we're siblings if you consider our genealogy, but in order to prevent her from having to suffer because of our reckless parents again, I decided to raise her as if she were my own daughter! Look! It's the confirmation document!"

.....Would they believe me? Probably not. Even I think this is completely far-fetched.

If she was going to make a forgery anyway, then it would have been nice if she made a story that was a bit more believable. She really doesn't do her job properly. That's why she even made me do her observation job for her. Outsourcing, my ass.

“.....What are you talking about?”

Look. Our homeroom teacher was looking at me with outright doubtful eyes. The gaze of a doubtful gorilla was scarier than I thought it would be. The other people's gazes were scary as well, but I can't lose here.

“L-Like I said, Jaim, who one of our parents had given birth to overseas and neglected in an orphanage because they didn't acknowledge her, came here looking for me. So like this, as the duty of her brother, I decided that I'm going to properly raise her like a parent would! Here, I also have the confirmation documents from her orphanage!”



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제정일시 2011.11.11

The gorilla's eyes skimmed through the documents once he received it from me. 'First Bom Orphanage'^[1], isn't this too obvious? For her to do a pun with her own name.

“.....What does this mean?”

Once our homeroom teacher showed the others the documents, the other teachers, the police officer, and the people from the children shelter gathered together and started to mutter among one another. Huh, it worked?

“In any case! Saeyeon and I will look after this child with our love!”

Several gazes returned to me once I had shouted that.

“.....Jjaro.”

Among those gazes, there was Saeyeon's as well.

My resolve shook because of the next words I had to say.

It was something I had to say. I was aware of that. This part was the most important.

But, it was difficult to open my mouth. Rather than fighting against government authorities, this was incomparably more terrifying. My urge to run away grew stronger as Saeyeon approached me one step at a time.

I knew what kind of person Saeyeon was. I believe that I knew.

That's why I'm more afraid. Because I had an experience like this a long time ago.

I thought I knew. Thus, I was more terrified of her response.

Even if I call it an experiment, if we become a family, there's the chance, that I could be betrayed.

Like that time, like **that day**.

“.....Ja Saeyeon.”

However, in spite of that,

I won't know unless I try.

I won't know unless I take a step forward.

I spoke.

“———**Help. I need you.**”

Uttering those two lines, was the hardest and scariest thing I had ever done until now.

I had told Saeyeon that I hated people like her.

I had asked her what a child like her could do to help.

That I didn't need, something like a family.

But, if I say words like these,

then how will Saeyeon respond?

Saeyeon opened her eyes wide because of my words, and then,
“.....I'm sorry!”

she lowered her head, and answered like that.

“What.....”

And everything was over, because of those words.

My vision was going dark. All of the strength from my body was leaving me.

Is it ultimately going to end up the same? Was I the same?

Did I hold expectations arbitrarily and arbitrarily hoped that she would do something?

Yeah. It's obvious if you think about it. I had definitely told her that I disliked her. That I had never seen her as a woman. That I was sick and tired of her.

Of course she would hate me, loathe me. If I say something like that despite having said those other things before.

——If Jjaro is saying that, then that means he'll definitely do something.

Are you telling me, that those words weren't what I thought they meant?

Saeyeon's mouth started to move once more.

No. Stop. If, if I clearly hear your refusal right now, then I really don't think I'll be able to bear it. Seriously, I'll end up truly believing that things like families aren't needed and that the world has no value whatsoever.

"Until now, I believed that you liked me, Jjaro."

However, calmly, Saeyeon started to talk.

"Since I like Jjaro, Jjaro obviously likes me as well, every time you didn't respond whenever I said this and would sometimes be grumpy instead, I selfishly thought that it was all because you were just shy."

Although I wanted to shut my ears because I didn't want to hear any more, I couldn't do it. I had no other choice but to simply listen to what Saeyeon had to say.

However, in that moment, I opened my eyes widely.

"I, hk, didn't try to understand you, Jjaro. I never thought, hkk, about your feelings, Jjaro."

“You…….”

I couldn't believe it, so I could only ask.

“.....Why are you crying?”

As tears flowed down her face, Saeyeon cried.

“But……. Sniff. Even though, I kept saying I liked you, I never thought about your feelings! I'm, sorry for that…….”

No, that's not right.

Aren't I the bad guy? Aren't I the bad guy for having responded like that to you even though you told me that you liked me? Instead of getting mad, annoyed, and telling me that you won't listen to the request of a person like me, Why, why are you the one crying?

“I, thought that families were unconditionally a good thing. I thought it was obvious. Because I had one. Because I had a mom and dad and they treated me kindly, even my current mom treats me nicely.”

Saeyeon spoke while sobbing.

“So, hk, I didn't understand when you first got mad, Jjaro. I hated you. I thought Jjaro was my family as well, but, hkk, when I went home, uu, I thought about it while I was by myself, how Jjaro must have felt.”

If no one wanted me,

If no one loved me,

And if no one thought about me, then how would it feel.

“It was too sad. I couldn't stop crying. So I realized what I had done to you, Jjaro.”

The words that she had thoughtlessly said.

What Mom made for dinner last night.

The amusement park I went to on the weekend was really fun.

The new clothes that Dad bought for me were pretty.

Although those were normal things, those were words that approached me like daggers.

“I also thought that I would hate me. I thought that if I were like that, hkk, and someone said those things to me, then there’s no way that I would like it. So, I realized how it must have felt when I selfishly told you that I liked you, even though I had never considered your feelings.”

And then, as if she couldn’t hold it back any longer, Saeyeon started to wail.

“.....Uu, uuuuuuaaaaaaaah.....!”

While trying to wipe away her tears, Saeyeon spoke.

“I’m sorry, Jjaro..... I’m sorry, that I told you that I liked you, hkk, I’m sorry. Yesterday, I was, hic, going to apologize, but I couldn’t say it. Because, sniff, if I apologize, then I felt like you’d think I was asking you to forgive me.....”

Even though there’s no way that I could forgive her.

Even though there’s no way that I could forgive the person who I envied so much and was hurt by a countless number of times. Even though asking for forgiveness, would just hurt me again.

Because Saeyeon was crying much too beautifully as she said that while sobbing, “.....So, why are you the one crying?”

I could only smile.

“B-but..... Jjaro, you said that you needed me.”

In response to my question, Saeyeon spoke while wiping away her tears with both of her hands.

“Even though, honestly, I’m the one, hkk, who needs you, Jjaro. Jjaro, you said…….”

I placed my hand on top of her head and stroked her hair as I spoke.

“Listen carefully. I’m only going to ask you this one more time.”

Saeyeon lifted her head. I looked straight into her eyes.

“Help me. I need you. Now then, your answer?”

In response to that question,

“.....Okay!”

Saeyeon smiled brightly.

Similar to the expression she made some time ago, no, on that day ——the very day Jaim had appeared for the first time, “I, was waiting, for Jjaro to say that to me.”

she was displaying the happiest expression in the world.

“And, I believed. I believed that Jjaro, would definitely do something.”

Tears were still in the corners of her large eyes, and there were tear marks left on both of her red cheeks.

But without hiding her happiness from her face, She raised the corners of her smooth lips, and without even a touch of uneasiness, she smiled gorgeously, like a painting of a clear sky after a rainstorm that was drawn using clear watercolors.

Was this girl always this pretty? I couldn’t even have this sort of doubt.

With a face that looked as if she were a bride at a wedding, Saeyeon grabbed Jaim's other hand.

"This girl's name is Jin Jaim."

She then looked at everyone and boldly shouted.

"She's Jjaro and my daughter who was born after we slept together while holding hands!"

Ah.

Really, how could this girl be so.

Yeah. She's always been like this.

Before I knew it, I ended up smirking.

I lost.

I can't win against Saeyeon.

That's why I had hated this side of her the most.

Because she's a precious existence that I only have one of. Because she's an existence that will help me if something difficult happens and will share our happiness and struggles together. Because she was an obvious existence that would make things painful if she weren't around.

Always honest, always straight,

the person(family) who needed me and told me that she needed me.

That's why there was no way that I could have liked her.

That's why I couldn't hate her even if I tried.

There's no way, that I could win against that sort of person.

Nevertheless,

“You’re really misunderstanding a single thing, but…….”

I took in a deep breath, and shouted.

“Babies aren’t born if you go to sleep while holding hands, you have to have sex for them to be born!”

Because of my shout, my surroundings became evidently cold.

There’s no way that I could see someone I took care of as the opposite sex.

No matter how much she did, I couldn’t see her as anything more than my little sister.

There’s no way that I could have seen her as a woman. No matter how much her body has grown, no matter how much she tries to tempt me into seeing her as a woman, there’s no way that I would.

That’s only possible for people who are on equal standing.

It doesn’t work with that sort of desire to protect like fatherly and motherly love.

That’s why,

“Do you understand now, kid?! Babies are made when a man puts his phallus into woman’s genital area and……. Damn it, they’re born if you **unite** properly!”

by becoming one body, by becoming one.

“Whether it’s a married couple or a wife, you have to start with that.”

If we’re a **‘father’**, **‘mother’**, and **‘daughter’**.

If we want to start right, then as I thought, we have to get this part

straight.

On that day, on the day we went to sleep holding hands.

At first, Saeyeon must have been nervous since she touched, squeezed, and turned my hand, but as I had expected of Saeyeon, she fell into a deep sleep before even 30 minutes could pass.

So I was going to furtively release her hand and go home to sleep, but Saeyeon was still holding onto my hand tightly. I tried pulling it. She didn't let go. I tried releasing her hand one finger at a time. She didn't let go. Ah, seriously. I was also tired beyond belief, so I was going to just throw a fit and make her let go, but in that instant, Saeyeon's face entered my line of sight.

A face that looked happy that she was sleeping next to someone and holding their hand. A face that looked as if it had no worries whatsoever. While looking at Saeyeon who was smiling happily after having confirmed that my hand was still held in her own, I ended up chuckling.

I held her hand tightly, and laughed.

If she's this happy about holding my hand, then I'm at least capable of holding onto her outstretched hand as much as she wants.

Like this. Like now.

“Jaim, you saw that, right?”

I looked at Jaim who was opening her eyes wide and spoke.

“I've said this several times already, but I repay my debts. I'll fix the things I break. But what's up with you, kid?”

Once I flicked Jaim's forehead as I said that, she absentmindedly rubbed her forehead. I placed my hand on top of her head and grinned.

“The peace of the family——**is protected by the family.**”

“.....Yeah!”


In response to my words, Jaim grinned.

Good. Attagirl. That’s my daughter for you.

20XX March 24th

Please circle
today's weather.



Jjaro proposed to me! 

Translator's Notes

1. [\[↑\]](#) The **‘bom’** in Nabom’s name can be read as **‘Spring’**, so the name of the orphanage can be read as **‘First Spring Orphanage’**.

9. Report

Sunlight entered through the window. The birds were singing.

This was the best scene to be met with after a man and a woman had spent the night together in the same bed. An energetic and vigorous morning.

Her large eyes were peacefully shut like the princess in Sleeping Beauty, and both her charming cheeks, which looked good to pull on, and her smooth lips were moving in a chewing motion as if she were sleep talking.

Her pretty features, which made her closer to being a 'pretty girl' than a 'beautiful woman', were emanating a child-like, adorable atmosphere as it sparkled.

However, her physique didn't fit that face of hers.

Long and smooth limbs. Breasts that were neither too large nor too small and were just the perfect size to be called beautiful. The curve of her stomach and her lovely belly button didn't have a single fine hair. There was obviously no excess fat on her hips either.

"Ehehe....."

Additionally, above that body of hers, she was wearing only a single layer of thin pajamas which she hadn't buttoned up properly.

In a moment like this, where a girl is in this sort of attire and sleeping right next to you while in a defenseless state, I wonder how normal high school boys would react in this sort of situation.

'I climax from the start! I'll be heading up the stairs of adulthood first!', you, who had shouted this while loading your main armament, since it seems like you have no connection to this reality, I ask you to head off to some world of adult content. You should only dream

when you're sleeping. No, just sleep. I hope you stay dreaming forever.

If you're a sane and absolutely normal male high school student, then you would have most likely frozen up and started counting prime numbers in your head in order to do everything you could to suppress your desires and your morning physiological phenomenon.

But your heart would pound.

Your wave cannon would most likely become tingly.

We have exceeded 100% energy charged, we can fire at any time!

And my reaction.....

“.....Stop pushing Saeyeon's face towards me, kid.”

I glared at the brat who was pushing Saeyeon's head towards me from behind Saeyeon.

“You're awake, Dad?”

“What are you doing right now?”

“As I expected, I felt like it would only be proper procedure if a couple's morning started off with a morning kiss.”

Jaim giggled even while looking at me who was baring his teeth.

“Since you've also finished pitching your tent thanks to your morning physiological phenomenon, Dad, I thought that if I could encourage you enough, then, Oh Dear! Newlyweds these days sure have great marital chemistry and energy. As soon as they woke up, they went on another honeymoon to Hong Ko..... Ugyah!”

Once I had used my leg to push the kid who was speaking nonsense, Jaim, who had just been narrowly lying down at the edge of the bed, lost her balance and painfully fell to the floor. Thud! That sound was enough to make me know that she had hit the floor with

all of her weight.

“Uuuu……. Isn’t that going too far?! I even woke you up! What are you going to do if I died?!”

“I’ll at least build you a grave. Sheesh…….”

After snapping at Jaim who was glaring at me while rubbing the back of her head, I shook the still sleeping Saeyeon.

“Hey, Ja Saeyeon. Wake up.”

“Mm……. 5 more, minutes…….”

“Jaim, go.”

“……No!”

“You’re telling me that you have enough energy to utter nonsense this early in the morning, but you don’t have enough energy to wake Saeyeon up?”

“What do you mean nonsense? It’s the truth, isn’t it? Dad, if you keep this up, then you won’t be able to even pitch a tent when you grow older, you know? Around the Joseon Dynasty, people your age already had at least 2 or 3…….”

“That’s right. I haven’t done this lately.”

“Ububububububu!”

I see that these are still as stretchy as ever. After I let go of Jaim’s cheeks which made an audible ‘plop’ sound as they returned to their original position, I shook Saeyeon again.

“If you don’t wake up right now, then you won’t be eating any meat for breakfast, but you’ll be getting a garden of grass instead.”

“Hm? Meat?”

.....Jeez, how exactly does this girl's brain work?

“.....Where's, the meat.....?”

“.....Fine. As I had promised, I'll make some for you, so wake up properly.”

A broad smile spread across Saeyeon's face as she rubbed her eyes. Sheesh. Saeyeon spoke to me as I was about to grumble and get up from the bed.

“.....Ehehe. Did you sleep well, Jjaro?”

“.....I slept a lot thanks to you.”

Although blood wasn't circulating through my hand properly because Saeyeon had been holding onto it throughout the night, I looked out the window while stretching and massaging my tingling hand.

In any case, the weather was good today as well. Indeed, it was an energetic and vigorous morning.

A good day to go on a family outing.

“.....Jjaro, what about my morning kiss.....?”

“.....Go back to sleep. Sleep. Just sleep more.”

À À À

I wonder what has changed since then.

Change, my ass. Nothing has changed.

For now, let's talk about what happened immediately after that event.

Although it's good that I was able to reconcile with Saeyeon and bring Jaim back to normal, since we wound up filming a family soap opera while in front of all those people, we ended up receiving weird glances from them.

During homeroom on the very day when all of that had occurred, our gorilla homeroom teacher even went as far as to tell everyone in our class about what had happened during homeroom that day. I told you guys to stop clapping. You untaught masses. It's not like that.

After that, I had to go through hell.

As expected, Upperclassman Nabom had done a messy job. Since she had only gone as far as to make a couple of documents for me, I had to take care of the rest. I had to issue a certified copy, register Jaim, and handle all of the other trivial after-measures. These kinds of stuff are usually taken care of instantly in things like manga, but why wasn't that also the case in real life?

".....So, why is this weird woman here again?"

"I tagged along since Underclassman Jin Jaro's principle is to pay back someone who has helped him. On a side note, where are you, little girl? Ah, there you are. You were hidden underneath my breasts so I couldn't see you down there."

"H-Having large breasts isn't everything in life! Stupid!"

In the end, I had to receive Upperclassman Nabom's assistance again. Even though she does her work sloppily, she was at least a little helpful. Though I wound up hearing from her, "Just because I'm from the future, do you think I'll help you if you come running to me and beg 'Uaah, help me Upperclassman Nabom!'" as she let out a sigh. In any case.

"Mom, is it really all right for this weird woman to follow us?"

In response to Jaim's question, Saeyeon answered with a smile.

"It's okay. She helped Jjaro, so this is the least we can do for her. Isn't that right, **'Dear'**?"

"Dear? Didn't I tell you not to call me that?"

"That was definitely a confession, mon. You said that you needed me, mon."

"That wasn't a confession."

Damn it. I should have chosen my words better. That really wasn't what I meant.

Saeyeon smiled pleasantly in response to my grumbling.

I'm not sure how exactly she had misunderstood what I had said back then, but it seems she comprehended it along the lines of 'Jjaro proposed to me!'. This was why she was a kid. Every time I told her that that wasn't the case, Saeyeon would merely giggle and say 'You're just embarrassed, aren't you?'. How annoying.

"Well, even if he says that with his mouth, the rest of his body is honest. Look at how red his face is."

"I'm begging here, so can you please shut up?"

Nanda chuckled at my retort.

"Man, I know I told you to talk to her properly, but I never thought that you would even say something like that. 'You have to have sex for babies to be born!'. You really are amazing, Jjaro. A great man who deserves respect."

"Kyaa! Kyaa! Don't bring that up!"

"Jjaro, what exactly is sex?"

"Be quiet! You don't have to know about that yet!"

What can I say? I was a bit crazy at that time (lol).

I want to erase this memory completely with a Memory Manipulator.

While we were chatting, Jaim pulled on my sleeve.

“Dad, you’re going to buy me clothes as well, right?”

“An outfit that’s within 30,000 won.”

“.....Cheapskate.”

“I don’t have a lot of money. Moreover, didn’t I already fix your charger?”

“But you broke my game console! When are you going to fix that?”

“Kid, what are my beliefs?”

“But you promised that you would fix it back then.”

“That balance was closed because of the effort I had to go through in order to keep you here. Better luck next time.”

“.....Cheapskate. Stingy.”

In response to Jaim who had said that while sticking out her lips, Saeyeon giggled and stroked Jaim’s head.

“It’s okay, Jaim. This isn’t the first time Dad has been like that, right?”

“That’s true.”

“.....Saeyeon, you’re going to be like that as well?”

“All right! Mommy will buy a hairpin for you today, Jaim. Your mommy is a person who’s good at keeping promises after all.”

“Yup! Mom is good at keeping promises! Unlike a certain pile of junk.”

“Don’t call me a pile of junk! Don’t ignore me!”

Lately, these two have been getting along really well. Can’t someone do something about these two?

“That depends on how Underclassman Jin Jaro handles things from now on.”

When I had asked that at some point in time, Upperclassman Nabom had answered like that.

“Information contamination isn’t something that can be stopped just because you had dealt with it once. It can occur again and again as long as she continues to exist in this present time. However, that doesn’t mean it’ll only be in a negative way.”

“What’s that supposed to mean?”

“Mm, for example, if Underclassman Jin Jaro sticks right next to Underclassman Ja Saeyeon and enthusiastically behaves like a couple to the point of being flagrant, then there’s a chance that Miss Jaim will change into being a slightly kinder and more innocent child. Like a child who had been raised in a happy family.”

“.....What?”

“In other words, according to how Underclassman Jin Jaro looks after Miss Jaim, she could become an elegant lady or a twisted brat of this generation.”

“.....”

Now I even have to be concerned about child care. My stomach hurts.

While I was recalling that conversation and trying to calm my

stomach down, Saeyeon spoke.

“Now that I think about it, Jjaro, you have to buy me another flower pin.”

“.....Ah. Damn it.”

Jaim tilted her head in reaction to what Saeyeon had said while smiling and my response. Saeyeon explained while beaming.

“Jjaro and I made a promise a long time ago. Every time Jjaro and I have an argument, and Jjaro is the cause, then he has to buy me a hairpin after we reconcile. Isn't that so?”

“I don't remember since I'm apparently a man who doesn't keep his promises that well.”

Seriously, she even remembers a promise that we made during preschool. She's only good at remembering needless things. After pouting at my response, Saeyeon then grinned as if she had just recalled something.

“But Jjaro, what are we going to tell my mom and dad?”

“.....Ah.”

Now that I think about it, nearly a month has passed. It's almost around the time for Saeyeon's parents to return from their vacation, and when they do.....

“Jjaro and I had a daughter while they were gone on a vacation.”

“.....”

What should I do? Do I have to run away?

“Jaim, make sure you give your grandma and grandpa a proper greeting, okay?”

“Okay, Mom! Don't worry!”

In response to Saeyeon's words, Jaim confidently patted her chest.

I see. I don't have to worry, huh. You're confident, huh. That's a relief.

"I'll tell them that Dad properly united with Mom!"

"You brat, do you intend to get me killed?!"

Have you even thought for a second how those words could be misunderstood?!

"Dad, aren't you worrying too much?"

"That's all your fault."

"If you keep that up, then your head will go ba..... ubububububu?!"

"Shut it! It won't! My hair hasn't been falling out lately! Rather, tell me that's a joke! Tell me right this instant! Tell me that that won't actually happen!"

".....It won't."

"Good. That's how it should be."

"If you take care of it properly."

"Oi, you brat!"

"Jjaro, why are you bullying your daughter? Even though you said that you'll take care of her properly."

"That's right! You're being too harsh, Dad! Mom, scold him more!"

"Ah, seriously......"

I couldn't stop sighing. Why did I do this? No, not the going bald thing. My hair hasn't fallen out. It's just temporary stress.

Not that.

I feel as if I'm becoming like one of those untaught masses.

I hate families.

The fact that families are inseparable and are a relationship where you help each other when in trouble and share each other's happiness when something delightful happens was all a lie.

The saying that people can't live by themselves is the excuse of those weaklings who were deceived by that saying.

I won't be fooled by that sort of lie.

I'm tired of wasted efforts and vain hope after all.

“.....”

But, well.

I wound up smiling at Saeyeon and Jaim who were a couple of steps ahead of me and laughing together.

If everyone is going to embrace those vain efforts and hopes, if weak people, who help each other when something difficult happens and share each other's happiness when something delightful happens, are going to gather together, if family is what is made when everyone works hard and accomplishes their goals together, if it's this wife and daughter, then it might not be so bad.

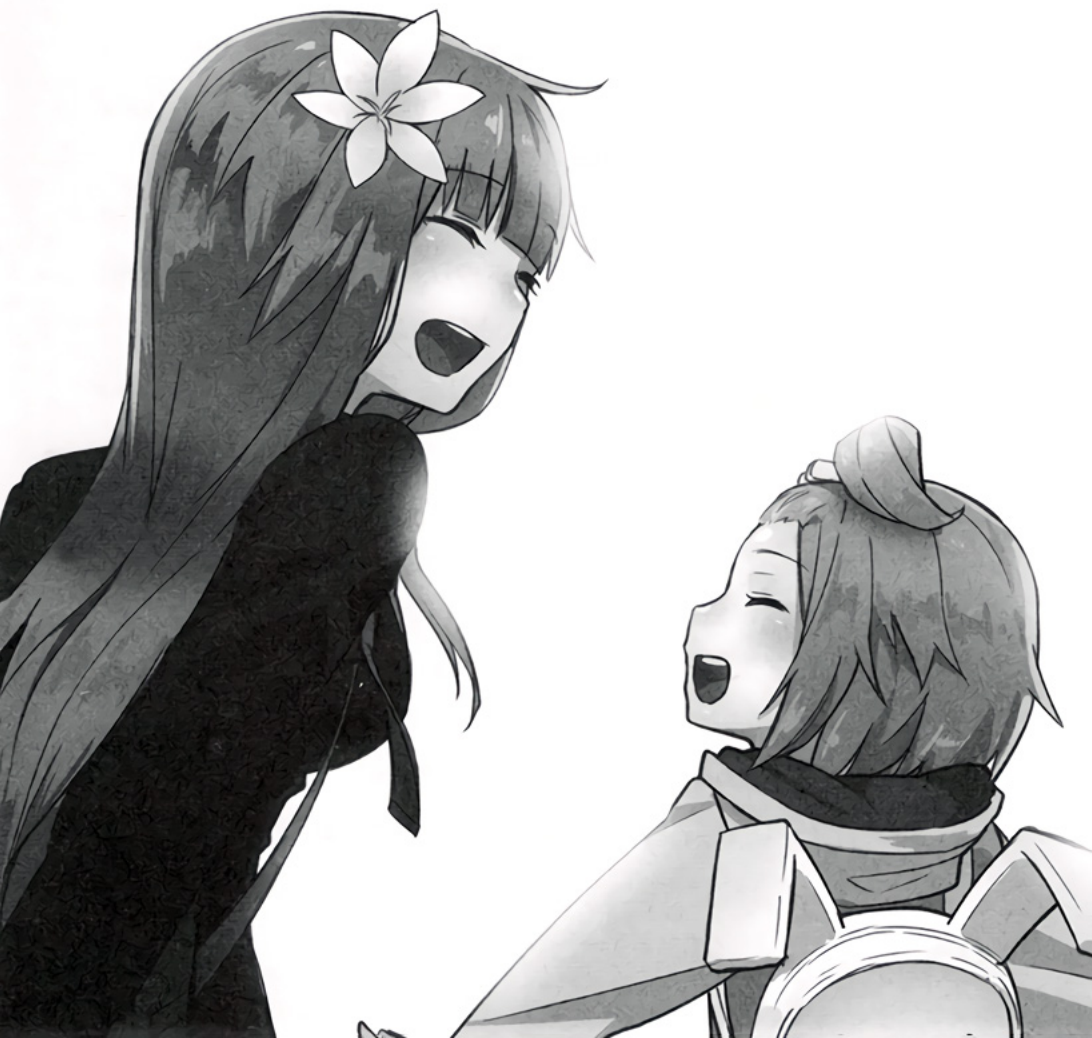
For now, I decided to think like that.

“.....By the way, Jjaro.”

“What is it?”

“Are we really going to sleep, while only holding hands, today as well.....?”

“.....We’re only going to hold hands and sleep! Seriously! Really!



〈Volume 1 End〉

Yes. Everything is proceeding **as planned**. The fluctuation rate is below the decimal point. Every situation has proceeded according to the manual.

Yes. He does not know yet. There is no need to be concerned since I am watching over him thoroughly. Underclassman Jin Jaro, no, Mr. Jin Jaro also believes that I had **accidentally revealed my identity to him**.

As I had expected, approaching him naturally is proceeding well. Everyone is maintaining their relationship with me while possessing an appropriate amount of resistance towards me. Yes. Yes. You do not have to worry about that problem as well.

The information contamination issue has all proceeded as planned as well. Yes. There are currently no problems whatsoever.

Pardon? No, wait. I had to tamper with the government authority of the past because I was simply following the plan, right? It was according to the manual.

Eh? Pardon? But why do I have to write a written apology.....? Yes? That's a joke, right? It isn't? Eeh, don't be like that. Everything I did was according to..... Rules are rules? No, that may be the case, but since **it was going to become like this since the beginning**..... No, I'm not complaining, yes. That may be the case, but still, that's, pardon? Wait, that's too much. Yes? Rationality? No, but still..... I'll be fired if I don't write one.....? Wait, wait a second!

Author's Afterword

The entire world had been dyed white.

And I, was becoming a snowman.

My steps which had stopped, the piling snow, and my frozen heart.

Leaving behind me who was like that, that child had begun to walk.

As if they had no regret.

I, who was unable to move because the snow that was piled on top of me had become too heavy, could only watch the child's back.

———It's okay.

I could only hear a soft voice, being carried by the wind.

———This isn't goodbye.

That child's head, stopped as it was slightly turning around.

That face which could only be furtively seen due to the hair that was covering it.

The thing that was flowing from their eye, was probably spring. They say that spring is what comes after the snow melts after all. Moreover, that child, compared to me who was like the winter, was like the spring.

———When you release a book one day, we'll meet again.

———At that time, please write a beautiful love story.

Snow continued to pile on top of me.

As if it truly intended to turn me into a snowman. As if something

like spring didn't exist.

Nevertheless, even within my winter-like body, there was a single spot where there was still warmth.

The lips which spring had momentarily visited.

Is what I would vacantly wish would happen as I live my life. Hello. I'm known as the lazy Ryu Hosung, everyone's friend, and our friend. This is my first time greeting you all through a book. Ah, that's my real name.

First things first, I give my sincere thanks to everyone for reading my book *〈We Should Have Slept While Only Holding Hands, And Yet?!〉*. Thank you very much. It's important so I said it twice. Your love gives me the strength to live through this rough life. You all provide me with the fuel. People say that you can't live on only bread. However, you can't live at all if you don't even have any bread.

Additionally, I'd like to apologize to those of you who bought *〈We Should Have Slept While Only Holding Hands, And Yet?!〉* at an offline market. I'm sorry. This is important as well so I said it twice. If there's someone who asked a female employee at a bookstore this,

“U-Uhm, c-can you tell me w-where ‘We Should Have Slept While Only Holding Hands, And Yet?!’ is located?!”

then I'm truly sorry. It's incredibly important so I said it three times.



I believe that all of you had experienced asking your parents ‘Where do babies come from?’ with sparkling eyes. Normally, parents who do not want to break their children's innocence would teach them that if you sleep with someone while holding hands, then a stork would bring a baby and place the baby in a cabbage patch, but I was told that I got picked up from under a bridge. Thanks to that, I was crooked during my childhood. Not too long ago, I realized the truth

hidden behind those words and my childhood innocence was scarred. It's better if pure and simple children didn't know.

Nevertheless, babies don't pop out of nowhere just by sleeping with someone while holding hands. It takes about 10 months before a baby can see sunlight. Even after that, they'll most likely be raised by their family's love and affection for a long period of time.

Of course, they probably won't be raised with solely their family's love and affection. You can tell by just watching TV. In my case, since I lived in a double-income family and because the age gap between me and my little sibling was large, I was traumatized during my childhood. Furthermore, they even said that I was a child they had picked up from under a bridge! Hmph!

People often compare the pain of their creations with labor pains. Although I don't know what that feeling is exactly since I'm a guy, and the mothers of the world might would most likely laugh in ridicule at that saying, I felt that a lot while I was writing this book. There were a lot of difficulties and times that I wanted to quit while I was working on this, but since I'm now here writing the afterword, I feel so happy because it feels like you've taken in my child.

I hope that all of you were able to at least feel a little bit happy as you read my son and daughter-like story. Please blame the flaws of the children on me, the parent.



Now my words of thanks.

First, Yoonameul who had drawn such fantastic illustrations. Every day, I recite a prayer 3 times towards the direction where they reside

a total of 5 times a day. I plan to visit and prostrate before them as soon as I'm able. Please don't be surprised if you open your front door one day and find me on my knees.

Additionally, I'd like to thank my editor. If I'm the mother(?), then my editor is the father(?). I'm sorry for not listening. I'm sorry for not being able to meet the deadline. Next time, I promise to not film an escape scene in order to avoid the deadline by jumping down from the 4th floor.

I'm also grateful to everyone who I've been indebted to until now. Although I had truly discovered a miraculous way to show my gratitude to each and every person that I'm indebted to, there isn't enough space in this afterword. No, seriously.

Finally, I'd like to thank my parents who had picked me, their son, up from underneath a bridge and for raising me to this day. I now have to go stand in front of my parents and say, "Beloved father, beloved mother! I hath released a book!", and then they'll ask "I see, what kind of book is it?", which I will then have to answer by telling them the title of the book. My future is dark.

It'd be nice if you all enjoyed this story. I'll see you in the next volume. Yours truly!